Libby Summer

A PRACTICAL ESSAY OF THE CONTEMPT OF THE WORLD.

By *WILLIAM NICHOLLS*, D.D.

Very proper for all that labour under any kind of Affliction, especially those who suffer for the sake of a good Conscience.

Sperne Voluptates: Nocet empta Dolore Voluptas, Hor. Ep. I.

Πᾶς δ' ἄνους ὃς ΒΙΟΝ Ἀσπάζεται, Κὐκ ἴσε Πίνον ἀνάπαυσιν, Eurip. Hippol.

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A PRACTICAL
ESSAY
ON THE
CONTEMPT
OF THE
WORLD.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE Sir JOHN TREVOR, Master of the Rolls.

Honoured Sir,

IT is now some Years since I presumed to beg your Patronage to this little Book, in its first Dress, but long after you were pleased to be a very kind Patron to myself, in bestowing a considerable Preferment upon me, and that in so Obliging and Generous a Manner, as will not only for ever command my Duty and Thankfulness to you, but, if it did not reflect too great an Ho-

DEDICATION.

must give myself to relate the Circumstances of it, would serve to silence the Clamours of your Adversaries. Now, Sir, I pray you to accept this small Offer again, as a Tribute of the sincere Love and Gratitude I bear towards you; and if you, or any others, shall receive any Spiritual Advantage by this Treatise, I shall praise God heartily for the same, and esteem it as an ample Reward of the Pains of,

SIR,

Your most Obliged, and

Ever Faithful Servant,

Wil. Nicholls.

PREFACE
TO THE
DEISTS
AND
Vicious LIBERTINES
of the Age.

why you do not own our Lord Jesus Christ, and his Gospel, is, because you are resolved to lead Unchristian Lives, and choose rather to part with your Religion than your Vices. I do not lay this Charge upon all of your Persuasion; for possibly there may be among you some Men of Sobriety and Morals, whom I may not have heard of: But from that little Acquaintance I have chanced to have with those of this Way, and upon the best Information I could get of them, I find generally they are Persons of very loose Lives, and who take no care to discharge the ordinary Duties of Morality. I see they are the most part abandoned to Lust and Intemperance, and live a Life of Roaring and Noise, or else at the best have [illegible] more secret Vices they will not [illegible] or however it is easy to [illegible] none of them do lead Lives of [illegible] vigilant Piety. Now, what [illegible] Reason that these Men, of all others in the Nation, [illegible] veiled Religion, [illegible] Scheme [illegible] should have the greatest Veneration, and [illegible] conform

conform their Lives to its most excellent precepts; how these are the Men that are of the greatest Capacity of Thought, and Application of Mind, and all other ways best qualified to detect the Cheat of Christianity, if there were any in it: but these, after having examined the Grounds of the Gospel, do acquiesce in it, and preside it; and Christianity is oppos'd, for the most part, only by some unthinking Debauchees, that are so far from examining the Truth of Christianity, that they hardly hear any thing of it, but what is prophanely said against it in *Play-Houses* and *Taverns*. Now, if something does not the matter more than ordinary, why should ask you how as much Respect as the Christian Religion, as those who call Priest Craftcraft? They Understand, and Read, and Think, as well as you, only they are not so Vicious. The true Reason is, you cannot endure to own the Truth of Religion, which is so wholly contrary to your [illegible] and have accustomed your selves unto, you [illegible] Profane Prelate, or Pulpit Pharisee; you find Consolations and Pleasure in your [illegible] which are [illegible] and when you cannot [illegible]

which are given you from the Belief of that Religion you have been educated in. This makes you eager to enquire every thing which is said against the Authority of it, and take up with any little Cavil which you think may destroy its Credit; this sets you upon Railing against the Ministry, Ridiculing and Burlesquing of Scripture, and Advancing against the Reasonableness of Christianity only some malapert Drollery, which any witty Man might say, and no wise Man would. But pray, Gentlemen, consider what a Cheat you put upon your selves in this! Tho' you should dispute the Belief of Christianity out of your Minds, what will you get by it? Your Natural Religion will not suffer you to be quiet in the Enjoyment of those Sins you are so unwilling to part with, and your own Reason will be always upbraiding you for committing such unprofitable Vices. So that if here Natural Religion were established in lieu of Christianity, you would have the same Objections against it, and be as much bewilder'd in it. But alas! this Natural Religion you pretend to, is only a Mock-show, and all that is Real in it, is to be found among pious Christians. I appeal to you, if you think your Piety are Sacrifices Enjoyned by Natural Religion? What think you, how they

they seriously Reflect upon God's Provi-
dence? Do they hope and his Mercy,
or beg his Assistance? Do they frequent-
ly, or at all, pray to God for his Grace
or Favour, for his Mercy or Pardon? Do
you believe only these in reading, practi-
cally, to have them before your mind
you in mind of your Duty to God and
your Neighbour? I am afraid, your Con-
science when do very little of all this;
and therefore, why do you think so much
for Eternal Religion against Christianity,
when you practise both alike? Do but
once Seriously practise what Natural Re-
ligion will require from you, and you
will quickly be brought up to Christianity.
Study but the Morality of the Gospel, and
as you find its Rules agreeable to Reason,
practise them; and this will make you be
all what you promise from Natural Re-
ligion; (viz.) good and sober Men; and
when you are good thus far, I am per-
swaded you will find little the rest of Chri-
stianity to quarrel at. For the desire of your
Soul to your Eternity in Christian
Belief, and the mean prejudices against them
by this ill Practice you give them, which
you talk all this Reasoning for, which you
pitifully endeavour to have be a great Rule
of your Conduct for Heaven, a Practical
Book of the whole Duty of Man, &c.

Heavenly to Profligate Conscience, be thoughtful and stupid with as much Piety, and more feelingly to the Confession, than any Chapter of *Seneca* or *Plutarch*. The Terms of Scripture, which you will frequently meet with, will not at all spoil that Mongrel Argument; and if you will allow them only human Authority, they will altogether prove as much as Shreds out of profane Authors. But alas! what is your Morality, which you make such a Noise with? It is for the most part Cupping a few Sentences; it may be, out of *Seneca*, which he now and then lays in a grave Mouth; when his plain pagan Lives are most influenced, and you are betwixt pleased with his lewd Dalliances with his *Lucilia* and *Gliria*. Read but constantly in your Bibles, and in other good Books, and pray to God for his assisting Grace, and then if you are not in a little while better Men, than by the Methods you take, I cannot flatter myself, that this little Book of *Moral Truths* will do you more good than others in our own Tongue which are better wrote; but if you will give yourselves the Trouble of reading it, I desire you without so slight a Reason for it, I hope, that no Argument used in Vain, [illegible] from the Book and Chapter [illegible] it may be [illegible] this

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[redacted]

OF THE CONTEMPT OF THE WORLD.

The INTRODUCTION.

I AM apt to think that this will be thought by many but an odd sort of an Undertaking, to write a Book of the Contempt of that which the Generality of Mankind place so much esteem upon. Some may take it for a foolish Attempt, like the Encomium of Nero, the Praise of Folly, and the Panegyrick upon Flies or Fleas. Others may imagine that the Author is either farmed by some Philosophick mind, or else grown a meer Bit of Melancholy, and by his choice to give Vent to his Fiction or his Spleen this way. But let the Reader be assured, that there is no-

Design to do Good. The Author is not in-
sensible how great a Court most Men pay
to that [illegible] which he would have them
despise. He has been a Looking-
Spectator how eager Men are in the Pur-
suit of Riches and Honours, and sensual
Enjoyments; how they lay out their
Thoughts and Pains in the Attainment of
these, and are often at the Expence not
only of their Ease, but their Salvation
likewise, to purchase them. And upon this
Consideration [illegible] to
spend a few Hours in composing this little
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

[illegible] to every Thing which relates only to this Life, such as Wit, Learning, Beauty, Honour, Riches, &c. as shews that we slightly value the Things of the other World, and only take up with these as a comfortable Provision and Fare, as we are going on forward in our Journey to Heaven. Now this is not a Virtue purely Moral, and which we might have come to the Knowledge of by the Light of Nature without Revelation; for certainly we Christians are more obliged to contemn the World than the Heathens were, who knew of no other World than this. They indeed were obliged to use the good Things of this World agreeably to the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety, so as not to make themselves, by the Enjoyment of them, Sots and Beasts. But it could never be expected that they, who had no Revelation of another Life after this, should be so perfectly Weaned and Indifferent to this World's Pleasures, as those who expect Pleasures of another sort at God's Right Hand for evermore. They who [illegible] of another Life after this, All [illegible] Life and Immortality [illegible] Gospel; and therefore they [illegible] well husband this Life's Goods to the best Advantage, and set a greater Value upon them than we ought in Reason to

to do; but 'tis our Duty to be very easily satisfied with any small Portion God is pleased to give us of them; not eagerly to grasp at and covet them, nor to over-value them when we have them, but to look upon them as very small and inconsiderable in comparison with the Happiness of the other World, and to be ready to part with the dearest of them, when they come in Competition with the Means of attaining that. This is a Duty which the Holy Scripture does in very many Places inculcate, as well in the Old Testament as in the New. The Holy Patriarch is so far from liking the good Things of this World, that though God had blessed him with Riches and Honour, &c. yet he complains, that for want of Children the Days of his Pilgrimage, Gen. xlvii. 9. Thus the Psalmist bids us, not to trust in Oppression, and if Riches increase, not to set our Heart upon them, Psal. lxii. 10. And Holy Job maintains his Integrity, because he had not made Gold his Hope, nor said to fine Gold, thou art my Confidence, Job xxxi. 24. But the New Testament is full of Instructions and Exhortations to this Virtue. Our Saviour tells us, If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple, Luk.

Luke xiv. 33. So again, he calls them to
Diſtinction, Eph. iii. upon this ſubject,
ſo particularly threatens us to be ſpit
out of his Mouth, or what we shall do, or
the whole Book of the Kingdom of Heaven
all ſuch things ſhall be called more fully
Apoſtle, 1 Cor. viii. 31. Now we have
World is not ſhadow, and for what we
God forbid that he ſhould glory, ſave only
the Croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by
World is crucified unto me, and I unto the
World, Gal. vi. 14. For the grace of God
exhorts us to ſuch duty, ſhews us
above, and not on Things, Col. iii. 2.
ſhip, iii. 8. he counts all Things but
the Excellency of the Knowledge of
Jeſus our Lord, for whom he has ſuffered
the Loſs of all Things, and did count them
but Dung, that he might win Chriſt.
2. John likewiſe commands us not to love
the World, neither the Things that are in
the World. If any Man love the World, the
Love of the Father is not in him. 1 John
ii. 15. And S. James informs us, that
the Friendſhip of the World is Enmity with
God, whoſoever therefore will be a Friend
of the World, is the Enemy of God, Jam.
iv. 4. This is ſufficient to ſhew, that the
whole Tenor of the Goſpel does require
us to be a Contempt of worldly

Things; that is, A Judgment Contrary of them, in comparison of our Eternal Happiness; and does withall inform us, what is meant by such a Contempt of the World.

CHAP. II.

Of the usual Mistakes concerning the Contempt of the World.

EVERY Christian is perswaded that the Things of this World are to be despised; but every one is not convinced in what manner he is to do it. Many will be following their Inclinations, rather than those of the Gospel, and yet for contemning the World after their Way. Now, the Mistakes which are on this Account may be reduced to seven Particulars.

IV. *In ruling the Perversness of Old Age for it.*

V. *In mistaking that Aversion to worldly things, arising from Sickness, for the same.*

VI. *Or that which arises from Discontent.*

VII. *In taking a voluntary Retirement from the World to be it.*

The first Mistake is,

Mistake in mistaking Things

I. *To think a Contempt of the World doth consist in putting ill Names upon the good Things of the World, and giving them odious Representations.* This may be joined out of a pious Design to make Men the more out of Love with them, but then it is oftentimes in Contradiction to Truth, and to the Disparagement of God's Creation. And thus they do, that call *Beauty* nothing else but a painted Sepulchre, or Corruption adorned, to be like the Apples of Sodom, beautiful without, and nothing but Dust within; that call *Honour* nothing but the Breath of the Multitude, a popular Wind, and the Air. So others call the *Riches* of the World, *Gold* and *Silver*, &c. a little shining Dirt, a little beautiful Earth, nothing better than the rest, but only in the Opinion of covetous Mind-men; and account great

Posses-

Inclinations to be but the lowest Step of a Man. Think that one cheats it to be born to little else, that serve to no Purpose, but to make themselves merely pitied themselves, and other People to gape after them. Or esteem that solemn Mean-natured Abstinence, that Quickness of Parts, and Strength of Reason, to be but a little Help of Thought, to entertain Wise People, and to impose upon Silly ones. Now, 'tis an ugly Thing for Men of good Parts, and a keen Temper, to rally upon, and to contemn any Thing, nay, Dulness, with all Manner of Discontent, will produce the same Effect. Of ancient Time, the Cynick Philosophers were remarkable for this, who were ready to find at every Thing that did not fall with their crabbed Inclinations, to take every Thing by the worst Handle, and to invent short Sayings upon the best Things, to make them look ridiculous. Hence they got the Name of *Cynicks*, or the Sect of *Dogs*. And we have too, in our Time, many People, that think they shew themselves good Christians, if they can get but a little of this Cant in their Mouths, and talk over some pure, fine Discourses, in Disparagement of those Things which God has made purposely to be admired. For certainly, a humorous Peevishness is a great Blemish, unless directed to evil Purposes.

Honesty. 'Tis observable, that Fashionable Persons are unfitted to such a Way of Living, or entertained in such Kind of Talk, Company, Garb, or Diversion, are so prejudiced against any Thing else that is different from it, as to take it for little less than Prophane and Unchristian. Thus phlegmatick and melancholy Persons, that sadly sort out to themselves Acquaintance of their own Spleen, they fancy that this Misery and Dejection do exceed the [illegible] Sobriety; that they are not fit [illegible] to be Christians; that none [illegible] Heaven, but only such as are fit [illegible] World. There are several in the World, that are never well, but when they are declaiming against the Pride of the Age, and the Pantasticalness, and Vanity of our modern Fashions, and yet take as much Pride themselves in keeping up to an old antiquated Dress, which has hardly been in Use this Century. I have known a Gentleman, who has thought he has [illegible] a wonderful Contempt of the World, by talking against Drinking, and has condemn'd some which he never knew Guilty of any Excess that way, only for misspending their Time, and wasting the Creature; and yet the same Person has [illegible] all the Week, and spent more [illegible] in a Month, than the others

have spent in Wine in a Year. I have known another, that would spend a Confidence of lasting Two-pence at Cards, whilst he was playing off Millions at Bank. I have seen others, who have condemned all manner of common Recreations and Divertisements, and yet have spent a great deal more Time in Riding, or Walking, or Stuttering about; and yet, in the mean time, they fancy this is Living in a Contempt of the World, and that they make ready for their *Affections on Things above*, when they pass such a severe Censure on *Things below*. But, such Persons should do well to consider, that the Goodness or Badness of such Affections does not depend upon their Averseness to them, but upon their Agreement or Disagreement to God's Commands, and the Occasion of Sin, which may probably follow upon them. This, to be merry and pleasant, is not more sinful than to be *severe* and *thoughtful*, and both argues an ill Heart we must confess: But Certainly, God did not make Religion only for the Philosophick and Melancholy, for down Looks and affected Countenances, as if it were the Mark of a Saint to look sickly and ghastly, and we ought to shun it as falling Sacrilege. Affectation is an unmanly Mirth in the peculiar Privileges of good Men, for all others have Gaiety

Virtue

Europe.

Things humane Nature is guilty of; yet a Glass or two, in the Entertainment of a Friend, or in Concerning of Business, can be by no means allowable; if we be sure to keep a wide Distance from the Bounds of Intemperance, both in our selves and others. For why should a Glass or two of Wine, more than a Glass or two of Sweet Meats? Or, why should we be

be condemn'd for Drinking that which we are not dry, more than for Eating what when we are not hungry? All these Actions, and a great many more of the same Nature, may be Good or Ill, according as they are us'd; but to condemn all Persons for the Use of these Things, is as unreasonable, as to condemn every one that is for either Water, or Fire, or Knives, or Swords, because it is possible that Men may use all these Things to their own Destruction. This is not a Contempt of the World, but only of such Things which we, perhaps, take no Pleasure in doing; nay, it is so far from contemning the World, that it is the maintaining and cherishing two very worldly Affections, I mean, Uncharitableness and Self-Love; when we, without Ground, pass a too severe Censure upon the Actions of our innocent Neighbour, and would be prescribing our Humours and Inclinations as a Rule of his Actions.

III. A third Mistake arises from taking the *Effects of ill Nature for it.*

We all know that Nature [illegible] has not made us all of the same Mould; [illegible] has been made of the harsh Constitution, and others seem to have come out of [illegible]

but rough Work. Some Natures are of that soft, even, delicate Disposition, that they seem to be formed altogether for the Good of the World; they are so made up of Love, and Kindness, and Goodness, so full of Charity and Generosity, that they are unwilling to disoblige any one, they take a Pride in advancing the Peace, and Honour, and Welfare of others, and seem so to take it to heart to hear of the Misfortunes or ill Reputs of any they converse with, and will stretch their Charity to the utmost stretch, to conceive, if possible, a favourable Opinion of them. So again, others are of that rugged warpid Disposition, that they seem to bear a good Affection to no body, that like Hedge-hogs lie wrapt up within themselves, and cast out their Prickles to every one they meet, in a manner, made up with Vinegar, so as to sour and curdle upon every Occasion and to like Nothing but what they do themselves. I am unwilling to charge all this ill Temper, which we may find so much of in the World, upon Nature only, but, I believe, 'tis Nature, tho' mixt to the best, degenerated with Pride and Malice, which runs into this ugly Constitution, and that does so much Mischief, and occasions so much Trouble in the World. Now, People of this Temper delight always to be

us; and some of these two wear off insensibly from us as we grow old. 'Tis a Mistake therefore to fancy, that we are arrived to a Contempt of the World, when we are only come to such a Period of Age; we do not then despise these worldly Pleasures, but only we know not how to relish them. I have known a Lady that had spent her Youth in the most frothy Vanity you can imagine, and as Age came on, she first planned herself, and cryed, how shy she lived the World! when most People guessed that true Reason was, because the World began to despise her. 'Tis no great Wonder, why a Gentlewoman of Seventy should take no Pleasure in dancing a Jigg; or that a Man, who had debauched himself before Forty, should at Sixty confine himself for his Ease to Wine and Women. This can be no more said to be a Contempt of the World, than a Man can be said to walk down Stairs, who is tumbled down Headlong. This is a Defect of Nature, and not an Overcoming of it. This is the happiness, no doubt, then what those Fond old People do, who pride themselves in the Sins of their Youth, and when Nature is grown decrepit, enjoy their Vices over again in Imagination. But however, this is far enough from the Virtue which we have

for this cruelty in committing what the Philosophers are able to enjoy, and not in fighting those we cannot. The best way for ancient Persons to try whether they are arrived to Contempt of the World is so, is to see how they can comport themselves, when those Infirmities are truly which are most incident to old Age. Let them try if they can wear the Coat of a Man of Gallt with as little Impatience, as the Disappointment of a Ball or a merry Meeting: And then I will say, indeed they are arrived to a complete Contempt of it. But generally this Carping at the Actions of young People, is rather the Infirmity of Old Age, than any Vertue; little we think Age of Man's Life hath always been reprehensible for; as Horace had observed seventeen hundred Years before [illegible]

Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum,
Multa recedentes adimunt &c.

Yet good we cannot conveniently [illegible]
Distaste, for hunger, wars, sedition,
Difficility, querulous, dotardness, covetousness,
To these, a certain [illegible]
Many Infirmities surround the Old,
They seek, and yet they dare not use their Gold:
They are in all their Enjoyments jealous,
And distrustful in every Thing they do.

The

old? 'Tis the Design of Nature to gratify

judge why it should be more reasonable to expect, that Men should contradict in this Age the standing Rules of Nature, and take up a Sorrowful unseasonal Melancholiness forty Years before their Time. This is no Fault in Youth, unless they let it run into that disorderly Inconsistency, as is contrary to good Manners, and the Dignity of our Religion; but to reprehend an innocent Gaiety in those Years, is only a Fault in them who have not enough considered Human Nature, or who are addicted to a fallen Moroseness, and Desire of making all People like themselves.

The Infirmities and Weakness of Body make [illegible] often think also, that they are [illegible] arrived to a true Contempt of the World. When sage Persons find their Infirmity of Body [illegible] they do not relish the Pleasures of this World, they are presently apt to fancy, that they perfectly abstain from them; but I am afraid a great many of them really do not. For a Contempt of the World does not consist in a bare not enjoying its Pleasures, but in relishing them when they [illegible] us. If the former only were the Case, Fools and Sinners might pretend as much to it as we, because they find no Satisfaction from the Pleasures of the World,

World any more than positive Sickness. *Contempt of the World*, which arises only from Indisposition of Body, is like a half-starv'd Glutton's Contempt of a Feast, not because he does not like it, but because he cannot taste it. I have known a certain ingenious Gentleman in this Nation, who, very young, happen'd to fall into very bad Company, and broke a good Constitution before Eight and Twenty: I have heard this Gentleman, under this Condition, make as pretty Declamations against the Vanity of what we call Pleasure, as you'll find among the Old Sages of *Greece* and *Rome*; and has seriously declared to me what a wonderful Contempt he found himself down upon those Trifles, which he formerly did, and which the World doth still make such Account of. And yet, when the same Person, by the Care of a good Physician, and Strength of Youth, had overcome his Distemper, he presently changed his Sentiments with his Course of Life again; he relaps'd into as much Lewdness and Prophaneness as before, and became a great Advocate for those very Crimes he under his Sickness did with so much Wit and Reason expose. Tis plain, here was not such a Contempt of the World as was pretended, and that it was the Incapacity only which Sickness created,

tuch) that gave the pretended Averſion birth. Sickneſs is often a good Preparative to the Contempt of the World; it is like the ſtraining a Stick towards the bending it the other way, and God Almighty often ſends it for this End: For, not to perceive the Pleaſures of the World, is one Step towards the deſpiſing them; but, for the true Contempt we muſt go yet higher, and deſpiſe them whether we can reliſh the Pleaſures of them or no. We muſt deſpiſe them at the ſame time when our Nature prompts us to deſire them, even when our Fleſh and Blood are hankering after them, when Temptations beat ſtrong upon us from without, and Grace only, and Religion do reſiſt within.

Rule VI. *Diſcontent is often taken for the genuine Contempt of the World.* When Men's Tempers are ſoured by ſome great Misfortune they have met withall in their Buſineſs or Deſigns, which leaves ſuch a Damp upon their Spirits, that they take but little Comfort in the Pleaſures of the World, they forthwith ſet up for a Contempt of it. The World frowns upon them, and they are reſolved to be even with it, and to raiſe at the World. This is frequently to be ſeen in many diſcarded Favourites at Court, who, becauſe

the

they cannot enjoy all the World, they will enjoy none of it; whose Ambition has met with a Check for mounting so high, and so moves downwards, not out of any natural Tendency, but only by a forcible Repulsion. Thus, in other Countries, disappointed Greatness, despised Pride, unfortunate Honours, fill up their Convents with People, who would like the World well enough, if it did not cross their Humours. But certainly, this is so far from being a Christian Vertue, that it is one of the worst sort of Vices; 'tis an insupportable piece of Pride and Arrogance, and a foolish Impatience of Mind. They have not all that their Ambition unjustly calls for, and therefore they despise that which they may lawfully enjoy. Like slomachful Children, who, if they cannot have what they like best, will eat nothing at all. They are so far from the true Christian Contempt, which *overcometh the World*, that they let every little silly Accident of the World overcome them, and make perfect Slaves of their Minds. The true Christian lets the Affections of the World fly over his Head, but these suffer them so light upon them, with such Force and Power, as to make them to lie struggling and groveling under them. Such Mens Exclaiming against the World is no Sign of their Contempt of it, only

more than an unsuccessful Lover can be
said to hate his Mistress, when his Railing
against her does not shew he has no Passion
for her, but only a fruitless one. We find
in Scripture two as wicked Men, as are, per-
haps, recorded there, to have despised all
the good Things of the World, and to have
enjoy'd nothing of all that great Affluence
they were provided with, because they
had met with a Disappointment in their
Desires. The first is the proud *Haman*, the
great Minister of State to *Ahasuerus*, the
mighty *Persian* Monarch, who had the chief
Power under the King *over a hundred and*
seventy Provinces; that could boast *of the*
Glory of his Riches, and the Multitude of his
Children, and all the Things wherein the King
had promoted him, and how he had advanced
him above the Servants of the King, &c. yet
all this (says he) *availeth me nothing, so long*
as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the King's
Gate, Esther v. 13. This Man, you see,
could enjoy none of these worldly Plea-
sures he was so amply provided with;
despised Pride, and the Respect which was
denied him by a poor *Jew*, made all these
Glories, which the greatest Men did de-
sire, and so few could attain to, perfectly
flat and insipid; nay, he perfectly dis-
ses them all, in Comparison of that sin-
Revenge he hopes to take upon his

Adversary

Adversary. And yet no one can call this a Contempt of the World, because it is rather a Worshiping and Idolizing a small and contemptible Part of it, an inconsiderable Punctilio of worldly Honour, which every wise Man ought to despise; but yet it made such an Impression upon this great Mind, that it swallow'd up all the other Delights he might have enjoy'd, and made him rather choose to be miserable to himself, than not to be valued by another. The second Instance is that of King *Ahab*, who, though he possess'd all the Riches and Honour of a Crown; yet, because he was disappointed of the Purchase of a poor Man's Vineyard, the soft Delights of his Palace give no Relish to him upon this Disappointment; but amidst all the Luxurious Entertainment of an Eastern Court, *he laid him down upon his Bed, and turned away his Face, and would eat no Bread*, 2 Kings xxi. 4. Now, this foolish Prince was so far from contemning the World, that he doted upon it; his Vanity, or Covetousness, or both, had got that Ascendent over him, that he would rather suffer his Life to be miserable, than to want some additional Happiness he fancy'd he should acquire, by possessing that poor Man's Inheritance. Therefore, the best way to try, when we lie under Discontent, whether our Con-

tempt of the World be true and genuine, and such as the Gospel doth recommend, is to consider whether or no we should despise the World at the same rate, if the Causes of our Discontent were removed; if we should after the same manner undervalue Riches, and Pleasures, and Honours, in a mighty Affluence of all these, as when we are in the greatest Want of them; if we do despise the World out of Love to God, and Obedience to his Commands, and not out of Love to ourselves, and to gratify our own Spleen and Passions; if our Neglect of all worldly Things is bottomed upon the Excellency of our Immortal Natures, upon the Greatness of our Everlasting Reward in Heaven, to which not only the Sufferings, but all the *Enjoyments of this present World are not worthy to be compared*. But to despise and undervalue the World upon any other Account, bespeaks us only to be of a peevish angry Temper, not to have a mind to improve our Religion by it, but only to vent our Spleen. And indeed, no one will like the World the less for such Railing against it, any more than they will believe discarded Favourites, despising Amoretto's, and disbanded Soldiers, when they rail against their Princes, their Mistresses, or their Commanders.

VII. *Another*

VII. *Another Miſtake is in fancying, that the Contempt of the World does conſiſt in an Eremitical, or Monaſtical Retirement from it.* Retiring from the World.

The *Papiſts* think there is no Contempt of the World to be ſhewn like that of running into a Monaſtery or Convent; that when once People are got within thoſe diſmal Grates and gloomy Cells, they have then bid adieu to all the Comforts of this Life, and partake of no ſort of Satisfaction between this and Heaven. But alas! a Monaſtery makes no better Saints, than a Gallows does Martyrs; they pretend there to renounce the World, becauſe they are forced to it; their Parents ſhut them up fair in a Cloyſter, and then they may get rid of it when they can. But granting the Retirement voluntary, as it ſometimes happens, and was very frequent three or four hundred Years after Chriſt, when Monks and Anchorites began; their Contempt of the World is not half ſo genuine and grave, as theirs is, who can deſpiſe it in the free and open Air, and in the Face of Mankind: Theſe ſhut themſelves up from the World, becauſe they are afraid they ſhall be captivated by its Charms; but the other deſpiſe it, whilſt they ſee all its Bravery ſhining about them.

Besides, there are many of these Recluses, that were never, or but little acquainted with those Pleasures of the World, which Men abroad experience; and therefore 'tis an easy Matter for them to despise that which they do not understand. For we find that wicked and ignorant Men can even despise the Joys of Heaven, because they are a great Way off, and because they have but little informed themselves about them. So that such a Monkish Despising of the World is not a Sign of any Thing else, but only their Ignorance. There is no doubt, but many of them, if they were more acquainted with the World, would like it better than they do; and we find by Experience, when upon Occasion they come out of their Cells, that they think the World has not so ill a Relish. But that Man may truly be said to despise it, who knows all the Pleasures of it, and yet does undervalue it; that is not beholden to a Cell and a mopish Life, but to God's Grace and his own Vertue, for his Aversion to it. As for the Monks Contempt of the World, it is such an one which tends to the Destruction of Society, which is the chief Ground of moral Vertue; for he shuts up and mancipates himself to a lazy Course of Life, and never contributes to the Happiness of his Fellow-Creatures, which is improved chiefly

chiefly by mutual Assistance. But the Pious Christian, that, without any such Monastick Restraint, really despises the World, he extends his Charity and Assistance, as far as he can, to all the Inhabitants of it; he considers, that tho' he is Heir to a better World, yet now he is a Member of this; and that his well Performing his Duty here, will entitle him to the Joys there. But after all, we do not find that a Monastery (especially as they are now-a-days in the *Romish* Church) does contribute more to the contemning the World, than living in a Court does; and if we may conclude any Thing from outward Appearance, the jolly Countenance of a well-fleshed Fryar shews he eats as well, and knows as little Care, as any sparkish Courtier of them all. Indeed, they make a great deal of Do, with Vows of Poverty and Chastity, and with their frequent Devotion; but this is for the most part all Face and Outside, and any one, that is acquainted enough with those Convents, will as soon believe Whores Vows, and Courtiers Promises, as the Sincerity of their Engagements. There is nobody but will assent to the Truth of this, when once he shall see how sumptuously their Tables are there furnished, and what Feasts they make even upon Fasting Days; how they

rist in the Contributions they get from superstitious People; how their Devotion is turned to a kind of a Pageantry and Recreation, only to pass away their Time, which most of them understand no more of, than I do of the Language of the *Laplanders*; how it is oftentimes turned to an Assignation for an Amour, and an Adultery is contrived in a Confession; how their Religious Houses are made the Sinks of all kind of Lewdness, the Stages of more than *Pagan* Villanies, and afford Matter and Subject for the lewd Poems and Novels of their Country. But if this be to contemn the World, if this be the Perfection of a Religious Life, then the Apostle is altogether mistaken in his black Catalogue of Adulterers, &c. 1 *Cor.* vi. 9. who shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; and all those famous Saints and Martyrs in the Primitive Times, which have been so much renowned for Temperance and Chastity, have mistook their Way thither; and Heaven Gates are open only to Cheats and Impostors, to Prostitutes and Panders.

I have now done with the Mistakes I thought fit to mention; and I proceed to shew in what a Contempt of the World does consist.

CHAP. III.

In what a true Contempt of the World does consist.

NOW, I think we may be said to have arrived to a true Christian Contempt of the World, if we take Care to observe these seven Particulars.

I. *To keep always the true Christian Greatness of Mind.*
II. *To be Content.*
III. *To practise all manner of Temperance.*
IV. *To be Humble.*
V. *To be Patient.*
VI. *To mortify our Bodies, and deny our selves.*
VII. *To place our Affections on heavenly Things.*

SECT. I.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in a Christian Magnanimity, or Greatness of Mind.

First, THerefore, a Contempt of the World doth consist in the *Christian Magnanimity*, or in keeping up to that *Greatness of Mind*, which

which is required under the Gospel. That *Magnanimity*, or *Greatness of Mind*, which was so talked of and extolled by the Heathens, I am inclined to believe, was rather Pride, than any Thing else. We find that the *Stoick* Books are full of this kind of Declamation; they are all for magnifying this sort of Temper, which they endeavoured themselves to frame, by appearing above the rest of the World, thereby making themselves in a manner Gods, and the rest of the World Slaves and Fools. They did not so much endeavour to raise in the World a great Opinion of Vertue, as one of themselves; and all those great Elogiums they invented upon the Contempt of Pleasure, and the Philosophical Happiness in the midst of Misery, seemed rather designed upon the Philosophers themselves, than their Subject: For if we look into the History of the Ancients, we shall find few of all the ancient Philosophers, excepting only *Socrates*, (whose Fame is enough blasted too) that did not live contrary to the Opinions they professed. And indeed, the Principles they went upon were too weak to support that Greatness of Mind which they pretended to: For there is no reason absolutely to despise the good Things of this World, and to raise our Minds so far above them,

as

as not to think them worth any manner of Regard: For the Fabrick of the Universe is a most glorious and admirable Compoſure, the Pleaſures of the Earth are entertaining and delightful, and are the ſubject of no Man's Contempt, ſimply conſidered. But when we conſider them in Compariſon with the Joys of another World, then they ſeem ſuch little empty Nothings, that any wiſe Man muſt contemn and undervalue them, when he has his Eye fixed upon that bleſſed State of Immortality. Now, becauſe the Philoſophers, and others among the Heathens, had no Revelation of this other State, they could not upon theſe juſt Grounds undervalue the good Things of this World; and therefore, when they pretend to it, their Averſion ſeems bottomed chiefly upon Pride, or Moroſeneſs, or at leaſt an Affectation of Singularity. But we Chriſtians have all the reaſon in the World to put on a Spirit of Magnanimity, and to have our Souls raiſed above the reſt of Mankind, becauſe we cannot turn our Eyes upon any Part almoſt of our Religion, but we find enough Satisfaction to elevate the moſt dreſſing Spirit.

1. As firſt, when we conſider barely our Profeſſion, how we ſtand diſtinguiſhed of

from

from the rest of the World, that God has called us with an holy Calling, 2 Tim. i. that we are a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a peculiar People, 1 Pet. ii. 9. These Considerations are sufficient to raise our Minds above all worldly Satisfactions, and to make us look on them as mean and pitiful Things. For what greater Honour can we possibly attain to, than this of our Christian Profession? We are wont strangely to overvalue and to talk and think mighty things of ourselves, when we are raised to a higher Step of Honour than we were before; only because our Prince has vouchsafed to lend us a Beam or two of his Dignity, and has given us a special Badge or Character to be distinguished from the Multitude of the Nation. We are apt to rate ourselves something higher in our own Estimation, when we consider how much we stand in the Favour of so great a Person. But when we consider, that we Christians are the Favourites of the great God of Heaven and Earth, that we receive our Title from the King of Kings, who is ten thousand times more above the most puissant Monarch, than he is above the meanest of his Subjects; when we consider that he has given us this distinguishing Character of our Profession, that he himself has directed us

to

to a Calling, thereby to be separated from the confused Multitude of Mankind; this should inspirit our Souls with such noble Thoughts and Resolutions, as should make us seem above every thing we see about us here: For what Honour can Riches or Titles reflect upon us, when we are already invested with the Ensigns of Honour from God himself? Or however, we shall shamefully disgrace the Dignity of our Profession, if we let others value themselves more upon a few empty Titles, which are only gilded Names, a few Words or Syllables, which the People are commanded to speak with Respect; than we do upon this Dignity of our Christian Profession, which we have delivered to us by the Hand and Authority of our great Creator.

From the Honour of our Founder.

2. We see most Men that have taken up any kind of Calling or Profession, whether liberal or otherwise, do retain an extraordinary Respect and Veneration for the Founder of that Profession, and do pride themselves in being Followers of so eminent a Person in his Generation. Thus we find that not only Monks and Fryars do think they have an Honour derived upon them from the Founders of their respective Orders, but even Mechanicks

chanicks are wont to set a Value upon themselves from the Reputation of the Author of their Mystery. But none came up in this Point to the ancient Philosophers, (who were very good Judges of the Reason of Things) for they seem oftentimes in a manner transported, when they reflect upon the Honour they receive from being Scholars and Followers of the great Masters and Authors of their Sect. We may perceive very often *Lucretius* to leave his Subject, to run Panegyricks upon his admired Master *Epicurus*. Nay, *Tully* and *Seneca* frequently break a Period, to commend *Plato* or *Zeno*. But what are all these to the Author of our Profession, our Lord *Jesus Christ, God Blessed for ever?* These, 'tis true, were great Men, and famous in their Generations, who have blessed the World with curious Inventions, and admirable Sciences; but *the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, the Founder of our Christian Religion, is no less than the eternal Son of God, that came down from Heaven, left his Father's Bosom, emptied himself, and eclipsed his eternal Glory, to plant this holy Religion here below, *to purify to himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works*, Tit. ii. 14. Now, if the good Fortune of a lucky Inventor, th

the great Wit and Study of a Learned Philosopher, if the strict Rules and Methods of a rigid Ascetick, can reflect so much Honour upon their Followers, as to make them look upon themselves on that Account the nobler and happier: To what Heights and Elevations of Mind should our Souls be raised, whose Profession is of so Divine an Original, the Author of whose Religion is as far above *Aristotle* and *Plato*, *Zeno* and *Democritus*, as the Eternal Wisdom of God is above the slight Sophisms and Conjectures in Philosophy?

3. If we look but upon the admirable Rules of our Holy Religion, by which it stands distinguished, both from the Law Natural and Judaical, we must needs have our Minds raised to a peculiar Degree of Greatness, as being thought worthy to be the Professors of so pure a *Doctrine*: How do the Philosophers, in their Books, applaud their great Happiness, by having attained to the wise Rules and Precepts of Morality, that they by these were enabled to live like Men, whilst the greatest Part of Mankind lived *more pecudum*, like Beasts, in Stupidity and Sensuality? And yet the greatest Heights that their Philosophy could attain to, fell vastly short of those admirable Precepts, which

From the Excellency of our Christian Doctrine.

which are enjoined by our Blessed Saviour. To see in our Religion a devout Saint denying his Affections, crucifying his Flesh, and abridging himself not only of unlawful and superfluous, but almost of necessary Enjoyments; to live with that Exactness, as expecting always to die, and to die with that Chearfulness, as being to live for ever; to suffer Persecution and Torments, not only with Tranquillity and Composedness of Mind, but even with Joy and Triumph; to resign up his innocent Breath, praying for his Enemies and Persecutors, and blessing the very Hand which is the Author of his Ruin: This must needs make us applaud our Felicity in belonging to such a Religion, which can produce such blessed and admirable Effects; and to despise all the little Arts of vain Philosophy, thinking the Rules thereof very imperfect and insufficient, which the great Proficients in it could little benefit by; but would leave the great Master himself sometimes Proud and Revengeful, Ambitious and Luxurious, after all his mighty Declamations against Vice, and his Panegyricks upon Vertue.

4. But more especially when we look upon the End of our Hopes, our Eternal Reward, which is promised to us in another World; this

From the Reward promised.

it

is the most powerful Motive of all to this magnanimous Contempt of the World which we are speaking of. If Philosophy only could in a great Measure effect this, which did propose no other Happiness, but the Excellency and Reward of Vertue itself, and the Satisfaction it bred in a vertuous Mind; how ought our Souls to be transported and raised above themselves, and to think all Things else nothing, when we consider the Vastness and Immensness of those Joys? Indeed some Men have contributed by their Notions to lessen this Valuation of the Joys in another World, and have much slackned Mens Endeavours after this inexpressible Happiness, by asserting that it is too selfish a Thing, to propound our being happy hereafter, as the greatest Motive of our Obedience; but that it is the only Christian Rule to propose the Glory of God as the ultimate End of all our Actions. Nay, some have run so far, as to say, that Men stand obliged to glorify God by their own endless Destruction, and that when they are predestinated to Everlasting Misery, they ought not to repine, because God's Glory is manifested thereby. But this is a most unreasonable Mistake, than which nothing can be more reflecting upon the Goodness of God, and more prejudicial to

true

true Piety. For such Texts of Scripture as these, *do all to the Glory of God*, 1 Cor. x. 31. *that God in all Things may be glorified*, 1 Pet. iv. 11. do not make God's Glory a distinct Thing from our own Happiness, but are so far from engaging us to the glorifying of God, without considering whether it be by our Happiness or Misery, that we are to make our own Happiness the End of all our Actions; because God is most glorified by the Happiness of his Creatures. For to fancy that God created us only to glorify and praise him, would be a far greater Absurdity, and would rather make God Almighty a *selfish* Being, to create us only for his own Ends, to sing *Hallelujah's*, and reflect his own Praises to him to all Eternity. This would be to impute the greatest Vanity imaginable to the best and wisest Being: But if we would think reasonably, and as we ought to do of God, we must think that he created us on purpose to do us good, that he has implanted in us a Faculty to desire above all Things our own Happiness, and when we do attain that, God's Glory is thereby the most manifested. So that 'tis all one, whether we desire God's Glory, or our own Happiness, because God's Glory is shown in our being happy.

But

But though we have all these Motives to raise in us this Magnanimity or Greatness of Soul, which a true Christian ought to have, yet we must take Care, whilst we are pursuing of this, that we do not fall into *Spiritual Pride*. For to pride ourselves in those free Graces which God has given us, to impute them to our own Power and Endeavours, and to despise others, to whom God's Holy Spirit has been more sparing in his Influences, is so far from a true Christian Magnanimity, that it is a certain Sign of a little and a narrow Soul. This itself far from being a Christian Vertue, shall it is the most devilish Vice a Man can commit. It is the true and proper Sin of the Devil; for it was that which did principally occasion his Fall. But we must let this Vertue of ours appear by retaining the greatest and noblest Thoughts of God we possibly can, by truly considering the Excellency of our Religion, and the Glorioufness of its Rewards, by meditating upon the Nobleness of our Nature, and the Turpitude of Sin; by thinking upon God's Hatred to Vice, and his great Desire to have us like him; by weighing the Dignity of our Calling, and the inestimable Price of our Redemption; and in a word, by our resolving never to do any Thing unbecoming those, to whom God has vouchsafed

so

so much Favour, never by a base Ingratitude to offend so great a Benefactor.

SECT. II.

That a Contempt of the World does consist in being Content.

A True Contempt of the World doth consist in arriving to a due Contentedness in whatsoever State of Life God shall think fit to place us. I do not take Content here in its largest Extent, so as to include such an universal Chearfulness of Mind, and ready Compliance with the Divine Pleasure, as to be content with the good Things we enjoy, and withal, patient under the Pains and Calamities we suffer: But I shall restrain the Word to its narrower and more common Signification, by which we understand, *such an Indifferency towards the State of Life we are to go through here, as not to be over-concerned about the Possession of Riches, whether we have them, or have them not.* For as for that Part of Contentedness, which is conversant about the bearing of Pain, Sickness, or other Calamities, I shall discourse of that under another Head, *viz. Of Patience.* Now it is plain, that no Man can be said to despise the World, that has an inordinate Desire for the Riches of it, that will not suffer himself

himself to enjoy these Comforts which God has given him, by his impatient longing for more; that has such a Hankering after the little Trifles of this World, Lands, Moneys, &c. that he dare not trust Providence with the Disposal of them, but will himself endeavour after them by unjust Means and Artifices, and distract himself with Thoughts of enjoying them for the future, at the Expence of his present Quiet and Satisfaction. Now this must be so far from despising the World, that it is a perfect Idolizing of it; for as the Apostle teaches, *Covetousness is Idolatry*; and it is all one to let *our Knees bow to Baal or* Ashtoth, or to *say to Gold, thou art my Hope*; *or to fine Gold, thou art my Confidence*, Job xxxi. 24. Therefore he that would arrive at a true Contempt of the World, must take care,

1. *Not to put his Trust and Confidence in the Riches which God has bestowed upon him.* This is the Advice of the Apostle, 1 Tim. vi. 17. *Charge them that are Rich in this World, that they trust not in uncertain Riches.* I believe there are few in the World, who will own this Charge, because 'tis so easy to be convinced of the contrary; they know ten thousand Pounds a Year will no sooner secure

Not to trust in Riches.

secure a Man from the Grave, than ten Pounds; and that a Lord has no better Title to Heaven than a Beggar. They know that Riches will of themselves cure no Disease, though they may breed a thousand; and that a Bag of Gold will afford no more Ease in a Fit of the Gout, than a Sack of Chaff. But yet it so happens for all this, that when Men are arrived to a great degree of Wealth, they act as if their Money could do every thing, as if it could not only purchase them Pleasure and Honour, but even Immortality. For if such Men did not really trust in their Riches, Why should they neglect all the true Means of their future Happiness, to acquire these? Why should they beggar their Souls, to improve their Estates? Why should they neglect God's Worship, and violate his Laws? Why should they defraud their Neighbour, nay even their own Backs and Bellies, to get an immeasurable quantity of their beloved Riches? If they did not really trust in these, Why should they behave themselves with that insupportable Haughtiness to Men of lower Fortunes; to look upon Men of little or no Estates, only as the Cattle or Vermine of the World; and to treat them as their Slaves and Vassals? for such a Temper as this is as far from a *Contempt of the World*, as

as Epicurism is from Abstinence, Fasts and Mortification; and as inconsistent with it, as the true Worship of God is with the Service of *Mammon*. We ought, in order to this Vertue, to look upon our Riches only as our *Viaticum*, to sustain us in our Journey to another World; to be very indifferent whether our Fare be so very much, or so very delicious, or no; and need only take care that it be but enough to bring us thither. We must consider, that 'tis but a little time we can enjoy them, and therefore 'tis not worth one's while to set one's Heart upon that which we must so shortly part with; but that we ought rather to leave them with the same Readiness, as a Man puts off his Riding Cloaths, when he comes to his Journey's End. We see how sadly that poor Wretch was disappointed, who had other Thoughts of these Things, *Luk.* xii. 19. *Soul*, says he, *thou hast much Goods laid up for many Years, take thy Ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* He thought he was like to have a glorious Time of it; he found he had Health to enjoy his Pleasures, and Pleasures to gratify his Appetite; he fancyed he could not wish farther than he could enjoy, and that his *Full Barns* would never leave his Desires empty: But alas! this jolly Scene of *Imagination* was quickly *over-clouded* by a melancholy Message;

This Night shall thy Soul be required of thee, Ver. 20. The grim Aspect of the King of Terrors made his Thoughts a little more serious and rational, and put him in mind, that when he depended so much upon his Wealth, he did not consider the Accidents which might supervene. Indeed the Scripture may very well call this Man Fool, for his fond Presumption of living to enjoy his Goods; but this Man would have enjoyed his Goods if he had lived, which was some small Degree of Wisdom; but as for those who depend upon their Riches, and yet never can have the Heart to enjoy them, they do much better, I am sure, deserve that Title.

Not to fear the Loss of Riches.

2. For a true Contempt of the World, it is necessary *we should not be over-concerned with the Fear of the Loss of the good Things we possess*. If we cast our Eyes round about us, we shall see a great Part of the World make themselves miserable only with the Fears of being so. They live well and happy enough at present, and find they have an Affluence of every Thing that is good and comfortable; but they are so disturbed for fear they should be deprived of these Comforts, that while they have them, they are never able to enjoy them. They are startled at every unusu-

unusual Accidents, for fear it should contribute to their Detriment; they are so full of disquieting Cautions in every Thing they do, lest they should by any means be circumvented or outwitted; they can never sleep without having taken a View of that which is almost impossible to be missing, and are apt to frame the Noise even of innocent Vermine into the Treachery of Assassins and Robbers. Now, tho' these unhappy Men do enjoy little enough of this World, yet they are very far from a Contempt of it; they have a great Love and Hankering after it, but put off the Enjoyment of it so from time to time, till they are dropt into the Grave, without ever tasting any of its Pleasures. But they might rather to enjoy the good Things which God has given them with Thankfulness, and to leave the Security of them for the future to the Disposal of his All-wise Providence; if he thinks it good for us, we shall enjoy them still, and if he does deprive us of them, it will be for our better. But although we had never so much Reason to suspect our future Condition to be good, yet it would be very foolish to let our Cares for the future spoil all our Enjoyments for the present; because this would make our Life all of a piece, and see our

Fluctuating Condition on a Level with our Unfortunate; this would be to anticipate our Misery, and make us feel more in Imagination before-hand, than in Experience when it comes. But 'tis extreme Madness to part with those certain Pleasures we may possess, out of Fear of an uncertain Deprivation of them. This is as wise a Project, as for a Man to give away his Estate for fear of losing it by Law; or to burn his House, to prevent Dilapidations. Such Men, though for their own Ease and Quiet only, should take Notice of that excellent Advice of our Blessed Saviour: *Take no Thought for the Morrow, for the Morrow shall take Thought for the Things of itself; Sufficient for the Day is the Evil thereof*, Matth. vi. 34. That is, enjoy the good Things with Thankfulness, which by God's Favour thou standest possessed of to Day, and disquiet not thyself by anxious Thoughts and Distractions about the future; every, the most happy, Day has Trouble enough of itself; therefore add not to the Disquietude of that which has but too much already.

Not to grieve at the Loss of Riches.

3. If we would rightly contemn the World, We *should not overmuch grieve at the Loss of our Riches.* Grief or Sorrow is

is a Natural Passion arising from the Loss of some Good, and is therefore implanted in us, to give us some Disquiet and Disatisfaction upon the Loss of such Good, and purpose to make us more circumspect and cautious in retaining what is good for us, and avoiding that which is evil. So that this Passion of *Sorrow* must needs be indifferent in itself, as all Natural Affections are; but must become evil, only upon Account of its Object, its Excess, or the like. Therefore, if we sorrow for that which we ought not to sorrow for, or longer than we ought, our Grief then becomes criminal. Now, there are some Things, the Loss of which is so trivial, that it would argue a most ridiculous Folly, to shew any, the least Degree of Sorrow for. For we should think a Man little better than mad, that would sit down in a melancholy and dejected Mood, for the Falling of a Hair from his Head, or a Tile from his House. And so proportionably in the Degree of Sorrow: We should not think that Man in a much better Condition, who should grieve as much for the Loss of a Horse, as for the Death of his Son and Heir. Indeed, a Man should not be insensible under any great Losses, because no wise Man can think it a Thing indifferent, whether one loseth one's own Soul, or beg's Salvation of

other Mens Hands; but a Man should take care not to be so dejected at the Loss of an House, or a Sum of Money, as if he had lost his Reason, or his Soul. I do not commend *Crates* for a Man of great Reason, for tumbling all his Wealth into the Sea himself; but I think that Man his less, who by excessive Grief for a Loss at Sea, will venture growing mad for it. For no Man possesses any Thing of such mighty Value in this World, as should give Occasion to him of intemperate Grief: A few Reflexions will furnish him with Philosophy enough to sustain the greatest Loss that can befall him. If a Man should lose all that he has, that *All* would be but a *Terræ Nil*, a *whole Nothing*, in respect of the Joys of Heaven, which he hopes in a short time to be Partaker of. And yet generally most Men possess more than they have lost; which should in all Reason breed more of Comfort, than the other does of Discontent. And therefore *Aristippus* said very wisely to one who came to condole with him for the Loss of his Farm: *You have, Sir, but my Farm, and I have three still, Why should not I rather condole with you?* Sometimes our Losses may be but the Divine Scourges for our Sins, in order to make us better; and then we may be as well sorry for our Physick, which we take to make us well.

well. Sometimes a Loss is compensated with a greater Gain, which otherways would have been impossible; it may put Men upon new, and more successful Projects, improve their Caution for the future, and double their Diligence. The Famous *Zeno* got his Philosophical Knowledge by a Shipwreck of all he had; for he was (as he reported) by that Accident drove into the Harbour of *Philosophy*, which was (says he) a very prosperous Voyage. A Man's Loss sometimes may prove for his Ease and Quiet, his Estate might before have been too cumbersome, and have bred him more Torment than Satisfaction, which is most certainly so in all Men, who love Quiet and Retirement. Poor *Anacreon*, when *Polycrates* had given him five Talents, he being a Poet, and not used much to Money, could not sleep for two whole Nights together, for thinking how to lock it up, or how to place it out safely; and thus, growing quickly weary of the Miser's Trade, comes back to his Benefactor, and desires him to take his Gift again; for it cost him more Care to keep, it than it was worth. But we Christians have rather Reason to bless God, for delivering us from a great deal of our Incumbrance; that he has discharged us of some part of our Stewardship; that by leaving us less, he has left

our Accounts the easier to be made up. These, and the like Considerations, being improved in our Minds, and seriously laid to Heart, will make us bear any the greatest Loss with a due Christian Contentment and Resignation to the Divine Pleasure; and will enable us to cry, with Holy *Job*, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the Name of the Lord.* By this we shall be enabled to follow the Example of those Pious Christians, which the Author to the *Hebrews* commends, *Hebr.* X. 34. *who took joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods, knowing in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and an enduring Substance.*

4. *Not to repine, if God has placed us in low and mean Circumstances in the World.* A Man cannot be said to despise the World, though he can enjoy never so little of it, that is always murmuring at Providence, because it has not afforded him a greater Share of those good Things which he sees other Men enjoy. And this Temper is as unreasonable as the foregoing one, because by this they both forfeit the Pleasures of their respective Conditions; the one loses all the Enjoyment of a plentiful Estate out of Fear of becoming Poor, and the other loses all the Satisfactions of Poverty,

Not to repine at Poverty.

Poverty, out of Vexation for not being Rich. There is no Condition in this World so valuable, as to grieve a wise Man, because he does not enjoy it; and there is no Condition so miserable, but he may find enough of Satisfaction in it, to keep him from repining and grudging at other Mens Felicity. He considers that the World is but a great Stage for Men to act their Parts on, and what cares he which Part comes to his Lot; for he knows if he acts the Peasant or the Beggar, he may have as much Applause, and as great a Reward, as by Personating an Emperor. He considers that he ought in Gratitude to thank God for the present Things he doth enjoy; but 'tis the greatest Impudence to quarrel with him, because he does not afford him more, when he had not the least Pretence to what he has afforded him already. He thinks rather how miserable he should have been, had he wanted the good Things now in his Possession; not how happy he should be in acquiring others. And this truly is enough to keep the poor Man from murmuring: He enjoys not only Life and Being, and other the more universal Benefits of Providence, but Health, Security, and many other Enjoyments, which rich Men envy the poor Man for, and would sometimes part with all they have to en-

ing. A great Estate will not make a Man live longer than a small one; nay, where One has been starved to Death with not having enough to subsist upon, Ten thousand have killed themselves, and shortened their Days by surfeiting upon too much. The Sun shines as gloriously upon the Cottage as the Palace, and the Moon lends as bright a Ray to the poor Man's Cart, as to the King's Coach. The Rains bestow as fattning a Moisture upon the poor Alms-Man's little Plot, as upon the Gardens of *Cæsar*; and the Winds breathe as delicious Breezes upon the Travelling Beggar, as upon the Triumphing Monarch. These are the ordinary and common Benefits of Poverty, which make it not to be despised and undervalued; but there are others which make it to be even wished for, and envyed at. What would the crazy Voluptuary give for the poor Man's Athletick Constitution? Though he rolls upon a Bed of Down, what would he give for the *Sleep of the Labouring Man*, which is *sweet, whether he eat little or much?* Eccl. v. 10. What would he part with for his Edge of Appetite, that makes his hard Food go down with such a Gust and Relish, as gives him more Satisfaction than the other receives from all his studyed Delicacies? How would he, who has run through half the

the Diseases of the Mind of Mortality, be willing to change Conditions with him who hardly ever knows a Disease, until it carries him thither, where he is like to know no more? I am confident, many a rich and powerful Favourite in Princes Courts (who seemed to Men of mean Estate the greatest Object of Envy) when he has found himself falling into Disgrace, and tumbling downwards faster than he ascended, when he has been surrounded with Dangers and Accusations from his Adversaries; such a great Man has thought the poorest Tenant in any of his Manors to be a happier Man than he; that could live without Danger from malicious Enemies, and the Practices of undermining Adversaries. For the Poor Man has no need to fear any of these frightful Calamities, which are so wont to terrify the Rich. Let what will Convulsions and Revolutions of State happen, he is sure he is low enough to have all those Storms pass over his Head; he is not in fear of losing that which is worth no one's taking up; he knows that it is only the Wealth and Possessions of the Rich that must glut the Visitor's Avarice. And truly this one Consideration makes the poor Man alone hearty and chearly, when all other Mens Faces are clouded with Fears and Distractions. I do

not urge this to prove that Poverty is the happiest Condition of Life, or to make Men espouse a Voluntary Poverty; but only to shew that God has so tempered the Conditions of Life, that in the meanest State of it, we may find many Things, which not only may keep us from repining, but which may be improved to a considerable Degree of Happiness.

Nor desire the greatest Plenty.

5. To come up to a Contempt of the World, *we ought not eagerly to desire great Riches:* For such Men are the very Slaves and Vassals of it, that are always digging in its Mines, who are still Sweating and Toiling for that Ore which others must at last enjoy. Now it is not every Endeavouring to raise an Estate, which is thus reprehensible; but only such an impetuous Desire, and such an unintermitted Pursuit after Riches, as renders us indisposed and uncapable to perform our other Duties which are incumbent upon us. I doubt not, but that a Man whom God has placed in a successful Way of Thriving, may as Lawfully improve his Estate, as he may enlarge his House or Garden: For unless the Purchasing Estates was allowed as a Reward to Vertue and Industry, all the Riches and good Things which the World affords,

affords, would always run in one Channel, and serve only to pamper, it may be, the foolish and lazy Progeny of some few wealthy Fore-fathers, who have entailed Money upon them without Sense or Honesty; whilst all the brave Men that have defended their Religion and Country, and have instructed the World by useful Inventions, by noble and profitable Sciences, must be for ever condemned to feed upon the Crums which fall from their Table, and be always content to subsist upon the Parings of their Estates. All the Fault lies, when Men make the getting of Money their chiefest Aim; when their Thoughts are set upon nothing else; when they sacrifice all their other Interests, their Credit and Reputation, their Bodies and Souls, only to obtain a great Estate; when they neglect the Worship of God for the Service of *Mammon*; when they are cruel and unmerciful, and suffer the Chink of their Money to drown the Cry of the Poor. I distinguish here the covetous Man from the Oppressor, who raises an Estate by Wrong and Robbery, by cheating Orphans and Widows, and other less circumspect People; for a Man may be wicked enough of all Conscience in raising an Estate, and yet never be guilty of what we generally call Dishonesty or Knavery. For the

Earthline

Earthliness of Mind, that Sordidness of Temper, that unmerciful Bowel-less Disposition of Soul, that Defraudation of the Poor of those good Things which are deposited in his Hands as Steward for them, that Idolizing of Riches, that Neglect of Religion, and Contempt of Heavenly Things, will, to all Intents and Purposes, as effectually damn a Man, as the other grosser Acts of Fraud and Injustice. I observe there are two sorts of Persons called Fools in Scripture, the Atheist, and the Covetous Man; the one, because in Contradiction to all Experience, he believes no God at all; and the other, because he has made the silliest Choice of a God imaginable, has placed for the Object of his Worship, a little senseless perishing Money. I shall not now dispute the Point, which is the greatest Fool of the two; but however, one would think that the Atheist doth bid fairer for Sense, who would rather own no God at all, than such a vile and contemptible one as the Covetous Man worships. And indeed, if we except Swearing, there is not a more unreasonable Sin in the World, than Covetousness is; because a Man proposes no tolerable and accountable End in following that Vice. He takes with other Vices, in hopes to enjoy the Satisfaction of them; but Covetousness can

can never endure to hear of any such Thing as Enjoyment; for to enjoy an Estate, to such a Man, is as great a Grief, as not to have it; he spends all his Lifetime in Sweat and Toil, and undergoes all the Care and Trouble of Riches, that somebody else after him may enjoy the Pleasure of them; which made one say very well, *That a Covetous Man does nothing well, but when he dies.* Other Vices are quiet and still when they are gratified; but this cries out for more, the more you give it. When a Man has got Ten thousand Pounds by Covetousness, he is more covetous than when he was worth but One hundred Pounds; for such a one's Desire is only his Disease, and therefore the covetous Man is compared to one in a Dropsy; for the greatest Accessions which he can hope for, will be so far from satisfying him, that they tend to nothing else, but only to augment his Thirst. But let such a one consider how this Vice doth expose him to the Scorn of all sensible Men, for acting so contrary to all Sense and Reason, by thus starving himself, only to pamper he knows not who after him. Let a Man's Estate be either Great or Small, Covetousness is the foolishest Project a Man can take up with. If a Man be poor, why

Publius Syrus. *Avarus nihil recte facit, nisi cum moritur.*

he is resolved upon Covetousness, that will not mend his Condition, but will keep him poor still; he may in time, 'tis true, get more Rags into his Coffer, but will be no better for them, than if he still was not worth one Farthing. But if a Man be rich, and yet be covetous, it is as unnatural, as to eat when a Man's Belly is full already; he may lay on a greater Load, but he cannot digest it, and it will be so far from nourishing him, that it will serve only to make him sick. For Men are much mistaken, if they think Happiness does consist in having a great Estate, tho' they had a Heart to use it, as few covetous Men have; for all that Men of the most exorbitant Revenues can enjoy, is felt with greater Pleasure by a Man of but a moderate Fortune: Such an one is arrayed decently with Cloaths that are better apt to defend him from the Injuries of the Weather, and yet not make him walk abroad in Fear of being robbed. He has enough about him to perform all useful and necessary Offices, and is not troubled with a Multitude of unruly Servants, who generally give a Man more Vexation than they do him Service, and like his Work better done by those few he maintains, than by a great many, who put their Duty off from one to another, and at last leave it undone. He has five times

times more Freedom with that his Mediocrity, than the others have with all their Greatness; whose pompous Equipage is only a Clog to them; for a Man had as good go abroad with a Keeper, as with a Multitude of Attendants; because such an one is a Prisoner within his own House, till his Servants are ready to conduct him out. His moderate Table is furnished with sufficient, and more wholsome Food, and his time of Eating is more at his own Command; tho' the other may have the Advantage of being oftner furnished, and making his Stomach stay for the Solemnity of his Entertainment. And upon this Account it was, that *Aristippus* the Philosopher handsomely compared a great Estate to a Pair of Shooes which are too big, that can serve to no other Purpose but to make a Man stumble. For certainly a wise Man would rather desire a Fortune that would just fit him, than such a large one which is more cumberſome than convenient. Now for these Reasons, Covetousness would be an unaccountable Thing, tho' a Man should purchase a great Estate by it, and enjoy it when he had done; but not one covetous Man in five thousand is so wise as to enjoy what he has got; he still keeps his Belly lank, that his Bags may swell, and punishes his own

Body

Body to pamper his Heirs. Such an one *Solomon* well describes, *Eccl.* vi. 2. *A Man to whom God has given Riches, Wealth, and Honour, so that he wanteth nothing for himself, of all that he desireth; yet God giveth him not Power to eat thereof.* He starves in the midst of his Affluence, heaps up Riches so long, till he is really Poor; and, as if he was running backwards in a Ring, he flies from *Poverty* so far back, till he runs upon that which he first avoided.

But it may be said, Why should Covetousness be so foul a Crime? it does no Harm to any body else, a Man thereby only forbears those Things which he might enjoy, which is an Injury to no one but himself; besides, Prudence engages us to take Care for the Future, and the Apostle says, *He that provides not for those of his own House, is worse than an Infidel.* To which I answer, 1. That a Man ought not to tyrannize over his own Body, any more than he ought to murder himself; as he has not such a Power over himself, as to destroy his Body, so neither ought he to defraud it of those necessary Refreshments, which God has ordered us to allow it, unless it be upon a Religious Account, in order to subject it the better to the Soul. Therefore he that starves his Belly to increase his Estate, is in a lesser Degree *Felo-de-se*, he felonio-

robs his Body of those Enjoyments which our bountiful Creator has provided for it. 2. The covetous Man injures the Publick either in letting that Money lie asleep by, which ought to be current for the Benefit of the Community, or by a penurious way of Living, which no ways contributes to the Circulation of Trade, which is the Sinews of all Society, and the Livelihood of the far greater Part of all Nations; by generally oppressing the Necessitous with extravagant Use and extortive Payments: Or lastly, by defrauding other poor Men of the Alms and Benefactions they have a Title to. 3. Neither ought we to be so solicitous for the Future, as not to enjoy the Present. We ought to commit all future Events to God's Disposal, who will provide for us as is most fit. He who could feed the *Israelites* with Bread from Heaven, and *Elijah* by Ravens, will most certainly never let us want what is fitting for us; which admirable Lesson we are taught by our Blessed Saviour, St. *Matt.* vi. 31, 32. *Therefore take no Thought, saying, What shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithall shall we be clothed? For after all these Things the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth you have need of all these Things.* 4. As for that Saying of St. *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* v. 8. by those *Imen*, or Persons of our own House,

House, are meant those of our Family, which are already fell into Necessity, who having rich Relations that can maintain them, the Apostle says, it is a Shame that they should be maintained by the Church, at her Charge; for, by that means, those Christian Kindred would shew themselves worse than the Infidels. He does in no ways encourage those miserly Fathers, who pine their Bodies, and barter away their Souls, to leave their Sons Wealthy. But, altho' the Apostle should urge it as a Duty of Parents, to lay up a competent Maintenance for their Children to subsist upon, when they are dead, which, indeed, is their Duty when they are placed in a thriving Way of Living; yet the Miser can from thence draw no Excuse for his Sin. For he endeavours to provide for their Luxury, rather than their Maintenance; and by his griping Avarice, entails such a Curse upon them, as will sooner make them miscarry, than prosper in the World.

SECT. III.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Temperate.

I Do not take Temperance here, in that large Extent which the School-men and many Writers of Ethick Books do, when

when they make it a Cardinal Vertue, and therefore muſt render it as comprehenſive as they can, to take in the other Vertues under it; for they make Temperance to conſiſt in the Moderation of all thoſe Things, which are, in their Phraſe, *maxime alicuntia*, which do very much tempt a Man, whether they be Pleaſures of the Mind, or the Body; ſo that in this Acceptation, not only Corporeal Pleaſures, but alſo the Paſſions of the Soul, ſuch as Anger and Revenge, are the Object of Temperance too. But I ſhall take it in that Senſe, which *Ariſtotle*, in the third Book of his *Ethicks*, doth, where he defines Temperance to be a *Mediocrity about the Pleaſures of the Body*, that is, *a moderate Uſe of them*. So that a Man may be, in ſome meaſure, intemperate, by immoderate uſing of any of thoſe Pleaſures, which are convey'd by any of his Senſes; by an extravagant Delight in hearing Muſick, by looking upon fine Proſpects and Pictures, and by ſmelling delicious Perfumes, as well as by whoring or drinking. But becauſe the two other Senſes are more ſtrong and unruly, they meet with more Occaſions, and have more violent Temptations to invite Men to their Pleaſures; 'tis the Buſineſs chiefly of Temperance, to moderate

Aquin. 22. q. 4.

rate the Use of Pleasures arising from them. In the Moderation therefore of these Pleasures, Temperance becomes a threefold Vertue, and branches it self into, 1. *Abstinence.* 2. *Sobriety.* 3. *Chastity.*

PART I.

Of Abstinence, the first Branch of Temperance.

THESE three Vertues, next to the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, are the strongest Defence against the greatest Shocks the World and the Devil can make upon us; for those Pleasures, which it is their Province to govern, are as it were their *Grand Artillery*, whilst other Temptations are but their *Small Shot*; with those they make only their little *Attacks* upon us, but with these they even *storm* our Innocence. Therefore he that does in any Measure pretend to *overcome the World*, must be sure to subdue these Pleasures by the constant Practice of these Vertues; for these are so essential to all Religion, that there is no pretending to it without them; we may be excused perhaps from some other Vertues, because they are not altogether so intelligible; but these are such plain Dictates of our Understanding, that

By the Practice of Temperance.

there

there is no pleading against them: Other Vices may not be so dangerous to retain; but *Gluttony*, *Drunkenness*, and *Whoredom*, will most certainly sink a Man to the Bottom of Hell, nor will all the other Vertues he possesses serve to bear him up; to eradicate other Vices, and to cherish these, is to be plaistering our *Finger* for a Scratch, whilst we neglect a Distemper which is preying upon our very *Vitals*; 'tis like beautifying our *Privies* and *Out-Works*, whilst we let the Enemy lie ravaging in the *Heart* of our Country. He therefore that would arrive to a Contempt of the World, must take care to be diligent in the Practice of *Abstinence*; which is shewn,

1. *In not eating over-much of our ordinary Food.* By over-much, must not be meant any Quantity of Meat particularly determined; so that each Man must eat fifteen or twenty Ounces at a time, and he that eats more is intemperate: For, as the Moralists say, It is not an * Arithmetical, but a Geometrical Proportion, which we are to square our Actions

Not to eat too much.

* Aristotle says very well, That the Medium in which Vertue doth consist, doth not lie as the Medium in an Arithmetical Proportion, equally distant from both Extremes; as in 1, 2, 3, whereof 2 is equally distant from both

Actions by; that is, in the present Case, the Bounds of Temperance in different Men are different; one Man of a very hail Constitution, whose Blood moves on rapidly in his Veins, and does daily boil off a great Part of itself by its agile Motion, or one whose Labour does weary him by continual Consumption of his Spirits, hath greater Need of a Supply from a larger Quantity of Nourishment, than the cold Phlegmatick, whose Pulse hardly creeps within him, or those unactive or idle People, who scarce ever stir all the Week from their Bed or their Chair. Nor should any Man oblige himself to set Rules, as to the Quantity he is to eat, because as our Health varies, we may eat more or less; and because these Whimsies of *Lesser* Diets, of weighing of Meats and Drinks,

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both Extremes, because 3 is as much above 2, as 1 is under it; but as in a Geometrical Proportion, viz. 4, 8, 16, where the middle Number 8 comes nearer in Value to 4, than to 16; so are we to set out the Mean of Virtue nearer or further from the Extremes, as Prudence shall direct. As for instance, suppose three Pounds of Meat be too much for any Man to eat, and one Pound too little, we must not therefore take the Middle, and oblige every Man to eat two Pounds; but must leave every Man to use a Prudential Mean, as let the strongest Constitutions come the nighest to three, and the weakest to one.

to

to be eat at such Times, at such Distance from Sleep or another Meal, as may be to have in them more of the Sober than either *Profuse* or *Lofty*. Every Man's own Reason will direct him how to avoid Excess of Eating, as well as any *Colour* or *Fortune* of them all, and to follow *Nature* in eating when a Man is a-hungry, and in drinking when he is a-dry, and not to Repletion, and to an Over-charging her, is far more wholsome and friendly, than all the little Rules of nice Art and Pedantry. But to eat gluttonously, more than Nature does require, and more than she can digest; to use Arts to provoke an extraordinary Appetite, and to increase the Pleasure of Eating; to use Decoctions to eat a great deal, and strong Drinks to digest it, are Actions so filthy Scandalous, that all Mankind are agreed to fix the most detestable Infamy upon them. All Vices are really Scandalous and reproachful, or at least ought to be so; but this appears to all Men, to have something more of Ugliness than the rest: For many Men have arrived to such an Impudence in Vice, to such a *Glorying in their Shame*, that they have openly avowed themselves guilty of *Whoredom* and *Drunkenness*, *Murder* and *Revenge*; but I never yet knew a Man that had Face enough to profess himself a Glut-

sin. This is a Vice so perfectly brutish, that a Man not only disparages, but even dethrones his Reason in submitting to it, by putting that Noble Faculty upon such vile Offices, as being a Slave and a Pander to his Belly. Many other Vices will suffer Men to prosecute their Calling and them together; they may be very vicious, and withall very industrious; but this Vice nails down their Hands to their Pockets, makes *Work* as uncomfortable to them as *Fasting*; it makes their Business go on with that Slowness and Heaviness, as if every Motion of their Hand went to their very Heart; they have learned to labour so much at their Meat, that they freeze at their Work. I might add, that this Vice does incapacitate Men for all Acts of Prayer and Devotion, and all other Religious Exercises; it fills the Soul with Carnal Ideas, and makes every Thing of a Spiritual Nature as easy to be seen by their Eyes, as their Understanding: The Fumes from their Stomach do so overcloud their Brain, that they would quickly flag the Wings of their Devotion, whenever they should attempt it; nor can we well suppose, that those refined Thoughts of Prayer and Contemplation should be ever found in such Minds which are hardly able to think at all. But I need not much urge this to those that

that can condescend to so filthy and so beastly a Sin, for they know but little what Devotion is, or concern themselves but little about it. But however, such Men may consider lastly, that Health is a Thing worthy their Consideration, that a Man should not eat too much, because he should not be sick too often; that their Excess of Eating will in time dull the Edge of their Appetite; that it will be the Parent of many Diseases, which will very much lessen their beloved Pleasure, or will bring on Death, which will make it cease to be at all; that it is better for them to be thrifty of their darling Enjoyment, only to make it hold out the longer; that it is but an ill Bargain to linger out an Old Age in the Extremities of the Gout or Colick, for a few forfeiting Meals when they are young; or for the sake of this ugly Piece of Sensuality, to lose twenty or thirty Years out of their Life.

2. *In not making our constant Food upon the most delicious Meats.* I do not mean hereby, that all Persons of the best Quality should feed upon as hard Fare as the poorest, or that others, upon set Occasions of Rejoycing, should not provide themselves a more dainty and splendid Provision. For God has provided these good Things, *But not Constantly.*

which chiefly furnish out the most sumptuous Tables, or purposely to be enjoyed, and have made them but rare, because they should not be enjoyed too often; and he is so far from forbidding Feasting, that he did command many of them to his People the Jews, and his own Eternal Son has honoured a Marriage Feast with his own Presence. But to make it one's Business every Day to furnish a Table with Variety of Dainties, to rack one's Brain for stuffed and elaborate Dishes, to set our Heads at work only for our Bellies, to be more at a Loss for Sauces and new Ways of Dressing, than for Food; to let our Fancies hanker after every Thing that is rare and costly, and to frame our Palates to relish nothing but what is prodigiously expensive; this is to proclaim ourselves such soft and sensual Creatures, as not to deserve the Name of Men. One can hardly with Patience read the Books of *Horace* and *Juvenal*, *Lucan* and *Persius*, *Petronius*, *Seneca*, *Tacitus* and *Suetonius*, where we find the great Romans taxed with this intolerable Luxury; to see how that Noble People, which had formerly been famous for the most exalted Vertues, was then sunk into the lowest Dregs of this Effeminateness and Sensuality. Who can, without Indignation, read an

John ii.

an Affront offered to Humane Nature, read of such Wretches as *Caligula*, *Domitian*, and *Heliogabalus*, to send them finding Senators into the Sea to fetch home Fish and Fowl, and calling a Senate to consult how to dish out a great Fish; to see them rolling in Baths of flowing Nectar, dissolving Jewels worth a Million of our Money, and drinking them off to a Whore's Health? I cannot say we have any Injunctions in our Time, because we have seen that our Masters of so great Riches; but if we may make an Estimate of what they would do in such a Fortune, from the Vanity they shew in their present one, I am afraid many, not only in the Court, but in the City too, both Men and Women, would out-do any *Clodius*, *Caligula*, or *Heliogabalus* of them all. But to what Purpose should a Man study so much to please his Palate, when he may dine better upon the first Dish that offers itself? Nature herself is content and better satisfied with that which is most simple and readiest at hand; and if we will take a great Man's Word, *What our own Grounds and Barn-Doors afford us, are not only more wholsome, but more palatable to all impartial Tasters, than the Luxurious Tables of Kitchen-Clappers*, Ragous, Olio-meats, &c. and the others, they might so pass with us for a sure

of Poison. Nay, what, not only an irreligious, but what a silly Project is it, to lay out so much Pains, and be at such Expence, only to make ourselves sick; to use so much Art and Design to tempt our Palate to Gluttony, which of itself is inclined to Temperance; by a great deal of Charge, to sweeten that, which, after we are satisfied, would otherways go down like the most nauseous Potion; and which will generally make us but sick at last? This is so shameful a Practice, that by this we do not only become Brutes, but we out-go them in their own Kind, by how much the more our Reason furnishes us with those Artificial Methods of Gluttony which they want; and so enables us to become the greater Beasts of the Two.

Not Meats over nourishing.

3. *In not making our common Food upon Things which supply extraordinary Nourishment.*

Our Nature is of itself inclinable enough to Evil, and the Devil takes sufficient Advantage of our Health alone, to tempt us to unlawful Thoughts and Actions. But 'tis a Sign that some Men desire to be more wicked than the Devil wishes them to be; when they turn Tempters to themselves, by choosing such Food which will do his Business effectually, and save

him

him the Labour. The Ancients, in the more dissolute Times, were lewd enough of all Conscience, but they generally trusted to a vigorous Stock of Nature for it; but to the Shame of our Days, we aspire to their Wickedness, and yet must trust to Art to effect it: We have all the Will to be as lewd as they, but we want the Ability. But if neither Religion, nor Grace, nor any pious Principle will work upon such People, yet the Consideration that it debilitates their Constitution, and lessens their natural Flame by overmuch Fuel; that it casts an infamous Reproach upon their Nature, to let the World know it stands in need of such Helps; methinks this, if nothing else, should engage them to a more wise and temperate Practice.

PART II.

Of Sobriety, the Second Branch of Temperance.

THE Second Branch of Temperance is *Sobriety*, which is a *Temperance observed in Drinking*, as Abstinence was in Eating. Therefore to be sure every one that would contemn the World, must be perfect in the Rules of Sobriety, and wholly avoid the foul Sin of Drunkenness; which the Apostle tells us expressly

dif-inherit us of the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10. Now, to the compleat practice of Sobriety, it is requisite,

1. That a Man should not suffer himself to be surprized, or to the Loss of his Reason. And truly upon this Account all Men should be afraid of strong Drink, because it has that Effect upon them, as to deprive them for a time of the noblest Faculty they enjoy, because it makes a kind of an inter-regnum in them, when the Man is for some time deposed, and the Brute usurps the Throne. It was a mighty pretty Answer of young Cyrus in Xenophon, who being asked by his Grandfather to drink some Wine; No, Grandfather, says he, I shall not, because you see Pictures in it, for your Friends which were lately here upon your Birth-day, drank of it, and they all lost their Senses. And indeed it would make any one wonder what Charms there should be in Drunkenness, that should recommend it so much to the World: When we consider what Fools and Sots it makes of Men, to be the Sport of their own Company, and the Diversion of the Children in the Streets; that it makes them kick after every Debauch, and breaks their Constitution after many; that it discloses their Secrets, and makes them sorry for ever repent of what they

with them who have refolved to part with all Sobriety and good Senſe: Beſides, the Civility of the Age will hardly allow Men to lay too great a Reſtraint upon any one; and let a Man but eſtabliſh himſelf a Character of Sobriety, and the very Awe of his Vertue will keep the moſt impudent Drunkard from being too preſſing and importunate: So that in ſhort, no Man can be obliged to be drunk, unleſs he has a Mind to be ſo; and that is a thing ſo horribly ſcandalous, that few Men will care to own, and therefore I am ſure no Man ought to practiſe.

Not to make others ſo.

2. *He ſhould not encourage Drinking till others are drunk, though he be able to hold out longer.* A Man may be Sot and Drunkard enough of all Conſcience, and yet may poſſibly be never down-right drunk in all his Life. His Head may be of that Strength, as to ſecure his Reaſon, while that of all the Company lies drowned in their Liquor. But certainly this victorious Drunkard is not one jot more innocent than the others. The Scripture pronounces a Woe, not only againſt thoſe that are actually drunk, but againſt *them that are Mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle ſtrong Drink,* Iſa. v. 22. As for the Drunkards of the

ſhallower

shallower Head, by their Sickness after a Debauch, and the Shame of it, they are kept from drinking altogether so often; but the triumphant Drunkard has no Restraint upon him, for his constant Successes do animate and encourage him continually on to fresh Conquests. Indeed Drunkards of all sorts are equal in their Crime, as to their foolish having away their Time, and spoiling God's Creatures, as to their wastfully spending their Money, and neglecting their Business; but the strong-headed Drunkard is generally the more vicious, because he has separated all Modesty from his Vice, he glories in that which others are ashamed of, and has taken up the Office of being the Devil's Vicegerent, by first tempting Men to Sin, and afterwards exposing them to Shame.

3. *He should not spend too much Time in drinking.* Whenever Drinking is allowable, besides when we are a-dry, it is only for an innocent Recreation or Refreshment, when we are tired with Business, or have not much Business to do. And this cannot be for any long time; for either our Devotions, or Study, or Business, or Sleep, or something else will call us from it. But to turn this Recreation into an Employ, to take up our Sitting in a Company as if we

here to get our Livelihood in it, is to contradict the Reasons, Rules and Purposes of God's Providence; 'tis to set out our Time designedly for Drinking, and to do our Business by the by. I confess I have often heartily pitied the Misfortune of some Gentlemen of an illiterate Education, who can as soon spend an Afternoon without Breathing as without Drinking, for that is the best Expedient they think they can find to help off with their Time, which hangs so uncomfortably upon their Hands. Indeed these poor Gentlemen have reason almost to curse their Parents, that would give them no better an Education, whereby they can find no Relish in those noble Arts and Sciences, which make the Lives of other learned Gentlemen pass so pleasantly along: But however, no Gentleman can be so strictly put to it for Diversion, as to be forced upon Drinking for it; for when it is dry enough to be abroad, the Sports in the Field will give him all Entertainment more delightful and more innocent; and at other times we have Books enow in our own Tongue, in Divinity and History, Law and Morality, to spend a Day with Delight and Improvement; nay, even to make up with the freshy Entertainments of Plays and Romances, or every day to card and dice with

with the Ladies is Time better spent than to be a drinking.

4. *He should not be drinking at unseasonable Hours.* The Night is a Time which Nature hath set aside for Rest and Sleep; and when every Thing about us in the Dead of the Night is hush'd and still, methinks 'tis extremely Unnatural to hear the Noise and Mirth of jolly Companions. In the Day-time Nature seems to rejoice with us, with a Face of Gaiety and Delight, and the Sight of People stirring about us, seems to add something more of Life to our Pleasure; but in the Night-time Mens Voices seem to have a different Tone and Accent; the Time of Night seems always to mix something of a Melancholiness with the Mirth, as if one was hearing Stories among the Tombs. Therefore I wonder how it should come in Fashion, in downright Despight to the Order of Nature, to sit up Drinking in late a Nights, which they may find so much more convenient and pleasant a Time for it in the Day. Nay, Drinking to Excess in the Day-time is not more injurious to the Body than the hard Studying up long in the Night; for the Hours of Sleep only, and the Smell of the Air are as the Lamentations; so that for this Reason, those that are subject to

set

set up for Drinking, should, methinks, take always their Dose in the Day-time, that so they may be able to hold out their Trade the longer. Add to this the Trouble and Disturbance which is given to Servants and Attendance (to whom a certain Regard is due) and oftentimes to whole Families; and this will be a Motive to a good-natured Man to find out some fitter Opportunities to drink in.

How to spend too much Money.

5. *He should not spend too much Money in Drinking.* Many a Man *has been ruined in the World*, not only by keeping a drunken Company, but one that has been too expensive for him. For one Man can afford to spend more upon his Diversion, than will keep another Man's Family; so that if an ordinary Mechanick will keep Company with none but Gentlemen and Merchants, 'tis ten to one but he starves his Family by only paying his Club with them, who yet may never drink to Excess all the while. For every poor Man cannot pretend to those more generous Drinks, which may be well enough afforded by Persons of better Quality; the drinking of them may be no Detriment to their Families, while the other Man's Children may pine for Bread as he is drinking Wine. Now such a Man ought to consider, that his Drowsi-

is the last Thing he ought to consult, that he ought to provide his Family of *Necessaries* before he allows himself those *Superfluities*, and that his pleading that he never drinks to Excess will not in the least atone for his Inhumanity and Barbarity to his poor Family. And, perhaps, more Families, of late, in the Nation, have been ruined by this affectatious Vanity, than by down-right Debauchery; since Men of all Qualities almost have endeavoured to live alike; since every little Man is ambitious of keeping the best Company, out of hopes of getting some considerable Character and Reputation by it, altho' by all sensible Men of his own Cabal, he is look'd upon but as a bold and ostentatious Fellow, and is adjudged by God Almighty for not *providing for those of his own House, to be worse than an Infidel.*

PART III.

Of Chastity: The third Branch of Temperance.

THE third Branch of Temperance is Chastity, which is a Vertue which consists in *avoiding all unclean Actions, and all unmanly Behaviour.* Now therefore, that our Contemner of the World may be perfect in this, he ought,

1. *To*

To avoid all such an Affair whatsoever as an unmarried State. I will not say, that a State of Virginity is a State of Perfection; but it is certainly a State of very great Beauty and Purity; 'tis that which comes near to the State of Angels, and the nighest of any Thing in this World to the Nature of God himself. But then this State is to be a State of Virginity indeed, not only of Celibacy, as the *Papists* generally make it; where, if the Parties keep from marrying, they may commit all the Whoredoms and Villanies in the World, and yet keep their Oath of Continency most frequently. Nay, to see how they abuse the State of Virginity, with such abominable Permissions and Dispensations, it would put a modest Heathen to the Blush. To find how a great Number of the Casuists of that Church make simple Fornication but a Venial Sin, and when for Health Sake, and to expell an irritating Humour, no Sin at all; that the Pope can give a Licence to commit it; nay, that he has actually granted such a Licence as is beyond what any Man, tho' never so wicked, would expect: For Pope *Sixtus* IV. gave Leave

* Quoted by the Author of Lawful Power of Divorce, &c. p. 46. and by Wolfius's Lectiones Memorabiles, Tom. 1. p. 1170. See the Antilogia Lucii, &c. p. 18. Paris.

to the Cardinal of S. Lucia and all his Family to commit Sodomy all the three hot Months in the Year. And indeed, the Libertines of the Church of England are so far reconciled to the Romish Church, as to plead for the Lawfulness of Fornication as frequently as they; with this only Difference, that these say, their Church has made it so; and the other are pleased to say, that their Priests only have made it so. Therefore this deserves to be considered a little more particularly.

1. Fornication, and all other Acts of Uncleanness are sinful, because they are an Undervaluing our Nature, the Putting us upon the most shameful Practices, such as no sober Reason will allow; contrary to the Design and Purport of Nature, and to the unspeakable Abuse and Dishonour both of Soul and Body. For our Bodies were given us by God Almighty to be serviceable to the Soul in all Spiritual and Rational Employments, and for the Conveyance of sensual Pleasures, so far as may make for the Preservation, and comfortable Subsistence of the Animal Life; but not to employ them to the vilest Purposes, not to make them a Bridge to our wicked Lusts and Desires, and to serve to all the filthy Ends of Brutishness and Sensuality. Now, the Apostle carries on this

Argument

Argument further, 1 *Cor.* vi. where he bids us flee Fornication, because *our Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost*; and therefore it is an horrible Impiety, to prophane with our wicked Lusts that Place, which is taken up for the Residence of the ever-blessed Spirit. But then what a greater Dishonour is it to our Immortal Souls, those pure Æthereal Substances, those Angelick Natures, to consent to such vile Actions, contrary to all Natural Law and Reason; to make them so undervalue themselves, and to neglect their own Interest and Happiness? And upon this Account the wise Man informs us, *Prov.* vi. 32. *Whoso committeth Adultery with a Woman, lacketh Understanding*; that is, he never acts more unbecoming an Intelligent Being, he never degrades Reason more, than in that, and such-like Actions.

2. This is contrary to the End and Institution of Matrimony, that State which God himself has appointed for the Propagation of Mankind, and for mutual Comfort and Assistance in this Life. For when once Men betake themselves to these unlawful Pleasures, they grow very cold and indifferent to the Comforts of a married Life, and take all Opportunities to decline it as an Enemy to their Pleasures and Natural Freedom. But this, at best, is but ma-

daciously to break out from those Fences, which God Almighty has made about us, and to pretend to a Freedom which is inconsistent with our Nature, and contrary to our Obedience. 'Tis to cassate and make void God's Holy Ordinance, to contemn and trample under foot that Primitive Institution, as old as our very State of Innocency; it's to invert the Order and Prescripts of Nature, to wrest God's Dispensations out of his Hands, and to prosecute their Enjoyments upon their own Terms and Measures.

3. 'Tis contrary to the express Word of God. For setting aside the Seventh Commandment, where under Adultery all Sins of Uncleanness are forbidden, and the woful Denunciation against them in many Places of the *Old Testament*; our Saviour's Command, *Matth.* v. 27. has improved the Old Precept: *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old Time, Thou shalt not commit Adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her already in his Heart.* Then certainly all outward Acts of Uncleanness are more diligently to be avoided, when the very Thoughts and Desires of it are so abundantly sinful. So the Apostle advises us, that we should *not fashion ourselves according to our former Lusts,*

Lusts, but to be Holy in all manner of Conversation, 1 Pet. i. 14. that we should not *make Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof*, Rom. xiii. 14. So 2 Tim. ii. 19. 1 Thess. iv. 3. bids us *abstain from fornication, that every one of us should know how to possess his Vessel* (i. e. his Body) *in Honour*. And he tells us farther, that *Fornicators shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*. From all which we may conclude, that, whatever the Libertines may further object, the Papists may as well make Murder or Incest to be Venial Sins, as Fornication; and as for the Pope's Licence and Indulgence for it, it will stand us in little stead, unless he could let a Man into Heaven for that, for which God has plainly declared He will keep him out.

Obj. 1. But some object, That *simple Fornication* is no Sin, because it is not forbid in the Ten Commandments; for if it be a Sin, it is a Sin against our Neighbour, and so reducible to the Second Table. But this is the Consent of two Persons voluntarily to an Act; and then, volenti non fit injuria, they injure no body, and so consequently, this can be no Sin against our Neighbour. To this may be answered, 1. That all Sins are not against God or our Neighbour, for there are Some against a Man's own Self, as are all such as are against the

the Dignity of our Nature, and the Design of our Creation, as Drunkenness, immoderate Anger, &c. and are reducible to the Second Table, either as the Causes, Incentives, or lesser Degrees of those greater Sins which are there forbidden. So Anger is reducible to Murder, because it is so frequently the Parent of it; Drunkenness, and other Intemperance, to Adultery, because it is an Incentive of it; and so likewise Fornication, and all other Uncleanness, to the same Commandment, because they are greater or lesser Degrees of that Vice which is there prohibited. 2. But this Sin is a Sin against a Man's Neighbour, as well as against himself; 'tis an Injury to the Relations and Families of the Persons thus abused; 'tis an Injury to the Publick, by defeating Legal Matrimony, and contributing to the Birth of Spurious Children; 'tis an Injury to the Persons of each other, by dishonouring their Bodies, as the Apostle speaks, and furthering them in the Commission of a known Sin.

Obj. 4. Others say, in Favour of Fornication and other *Uncleannesses*, that they are Things they cannot help; that their Temptations are so strong upon them, that there is no resisting them; and yet them use all the Reasons and Arguments

guments they can againſt them, yet ſtill they will prevail; and therefore, 'tis as good, they think, to make no Oppoſition at all, as to be ſure to be foil'd in the Enterprize. But, to this I anſwer, That, I hope, when they ſay they cannot help it, they are not neceſſitated or forced to ſuch an Action, for that is what we call a *Rape*; or that they are neceſſitated to them, as they are to eat or to drink: All that they can mean by it is, that they have ſtrong Inclinations to them, which will coſt them ſome trouble to conquer. But then, what is this to a Neceſſity? Is a Man neceſſitated to be ſtarved, becauſe it will coſt him ſome Pains to get a Livelihood? Is one forced to be a Slave to his Enemy, becauſe he muſt be at the Trouble of Encountring him before he can get rid of him? Why, ſo it is in the Caſe of our Luſts and Paſſions, we muſt ſtruggle and contend with them, reſiſt and ſubdue them, and not lazily ſuffer them to get the better of us, when with a little ſtriving we might get the better of them. 'Tis in vain to ſay, we muſt as well ſubmit to theſe *Appetites*, as to thoſe other *Deſires* of *Meat* and *Drink*; for the Fulfilling of thoſe is neceſſary to the Subſiſtence of Nature, and without which, a Man can hardly live a Day; but, I dare ſay, no Man was ever ſtarved by Chaſtity.

Yet

Yet after all, if the Man's Inclinations are so untameable, as to render his Life uneasy by the Impulse of continual Temptations, by the Weakness of his Resolutions, and the wearisom Employ of constant Watching and Observance, then God himself has provided a Remedy for this, the Holy State of Matrimony; and if he refuses to make Use of this Means, when he falls into Sin, 'tis at his own Peril. I have been something long in answering these two Objections, because they are the topping ones of the Debauchees, by which they would excuse their own Crimes, and betray others into the like.

2. *Our Contemner of the World ought to be Chaste in Matrimony, or to preserve the Marriage-Bed undefiled.* This is a Duty which has been accounted most Sacred and Inviolable in all Ages and Nations; and the Breach of it was never accounted a Matter of Mirth and Drollery, but amongst us Christians; who, nevertheless, to our Shame, profess a Religion which establishes Matrimony upon a firmer Foundation than any. Disagreement, and Inequality of Temper, or Age, are in other Religions Causes sufficient for Divorce; but, our Saviour saith, *Whosoever putteth away his Wife, saving for the Cause of Fornication, causeth her to commit Adultery; and he that marrieth*

v. 31. Nay, the Apostle adds a Reason of Encouragement for the making the Marriage State comfortable and happy, by engaging us to conjugal Chastity by the Honour of the Duty, and the Wickedness and Punishment of the Violation of it. *Marriage is honourable in all, and the Bed undefiled; but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge*, Heb. xiii. 4. It enjoins a most particular Love and Affection to each: St. *Paul* commands the ancient Women to instruct the younger ones to be *sober, and to love their Husbands*, Tit. ii. 4. but who did so could be sober, Tit. ii. 4. And in many other Places, the Husband is obliged *to love his Wife as Christ loved the Church, to love his Wife even as himself*; which keeps the highest and most ardent Degree of Love and Kindness. Therefore they that do any ways contribute to the Breach of this Love and Fidelity, have a better Pretence to be *Turks* or *Heathens*, or any Thing, than *Christians*. But to make an Estimate of the Wickedness of the Violation of Conjugal Chastity, be pleased to take a View of Adultery in a threefold Aspect.

1. Of the Adulterer of any Sort whatsoever, that shall defile his Neighbour's Bed. This, besides the Uncleanness of

mon to all Sins of this Nature, and the Violation of God's expreſs Commands, is an Injury ſo great and intolerable, as none but the injured Party can make a juſt Eſtimate of. How impatiently do we bear the Loſs of ſome ſmall Part of our Eſtates, the being over-reached in our Dealings, and the ill Return of our Adventures? And yet, as theſe are but ſlight, ſo they are reparable Loſſes; but this is to ſpoil us of that, which all Men and all Nations have accounted moſt Sacred; this is to diſunite thoſe Affections, which have been bound together by ſo many Mutual Rights and Vows, by the moſt Religious Oaths, and with the moſt Sacred Solemnity; this is to introduce a ſpurious Race into a Family, to put by often the true and genuine Heirs, and to deduce an irreverſible Theft down to all Poſterity; this is to expoſe our innocent Friend to all the Contempt and Contumely of the World, to all the inward Vexations of Soul, and to all the miſerable Effects of a divided Family. Methinks, however Men were hurried on by the *Impetus* and Rage of their wicked Luſts; methinks, I ſay, meer Natural Piety, and the Tenderneſs of Humane Nature ſhould keep them from acting ſo deſtructive againſt their Neighbour, the Effects

whereof are so horribly cruel, and so pestilentially injurious.

2. Of the Wickedness of this Sin on the part of the *Adulterous Husband*: He that hath *left the Wife of his Youth*, and *followed after strange Women*, that has contemned the chaste Embraces of the Conjugal Bed, for the polluted Love of an infamous Harlot: For him to behold the criminal Blackness of his Sin, 'tis but the Casting his Eyes back upon those sacred Engagements they made to each other before they entred into this Holy Order; to recollect those Vows and Protestations then interchangeably made, so uttered, and so repeated with the most earnest and most endearing Accents; let him remember those solemn Promises made before God in his Holy Temple, in the Face of his People and his Holy Angels; those Hands then joined together by God's Minister in Token of an indissoluble Band, and an uninterrupted Amity; and then let him consider how monstrously criminal it is to break thro' all these Tyes and Obligations, and to prosecute a Lust which is attended with all this Perfidiousness and Perjury. Let him consider further, how ungrateful and outrageous it is, thus to slight and despise her who has *left all to follow him*, that [illegible]

ted *her Father's House, and left her Mother that gave her Suck*, to take Sanctuary in his Bosom, and to live under his Protection; thus to neglect and contemn her, that has hitherto lived with him in an inviolable Loyalty, and unspotted Duty and Affection, and a constant Care and Tenderness; that has, perhaps, adorned his Bed with a numerous Offspring, so that *his Children flourish like Olive-Branches round about his Table*: Now, after all this, for him thus vilely to abuse his good Co-partner in every Fortune, it does manifest him guilty of the most wicked Treachery, the foulest Ingratitude, and to have a Soul sunk to the lowest Degree of Baseness and Inhumanity. Add to this the constant Troubles and Vexations in such a Family, the Disobedience of the Children, and the Coldness of their Love to such a Father, the daily Disquiet of the more innocent and unknowing Babes, that are wont to sympathize with their disconsolate Mother, the growing Wickedness of their riper Children, that will be too apt to imitate the Example of so lewd a Parent: But I shall conclude this Particular with that memorable Passage in the Prophet *Malachi*: *The Lord hath been Witness between thee and the Wife of thy Youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously; yet she is thy Compa-*

gion, and the Wife of thy Covenant. And did he not make one? yet had he the Residue of the Spirit; and wherefore but one? That he might seek a godly Seed: therefore take heed to your Spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the Wife of his Youth, Mal. ii. 14.

3. Of the Wickedness of this Sin on the part of the *Adulterous Wife*. Whatever Guilt is contracted by the adulterous Husband, the same is imputable to the adulterous Wife, because of the Mutualness of their Matrimonial Promises, and their other Obligations to a mutual Gratitude. But on the Woman's side, that is guilty of this Crime, there supervenes an additional Wickedness. She, before she can arrive at this Pitch of Impiety, must offer Violence to her Nature, break thro' all the Fences of her natural Modesty, and steel her Forehead with the most harden'd Impudence. She is not only guilty of the Breach of so many Oaths and Vows of Ingratitude to her kind Protector and Cherisher, but is perfidiously disloyal to her Head and Superior, to whom she owes so much Observance and Obedience; for whose Sake, she ought, not only to maintain her Chastity entire, but even an unspotted and unquestionable Reputation; and therefore, to defile his Bed with the Embraces of an impure Adulterer, is not only an Injury, but

but a Treason, a most disloyal and impious Conspiracy. But the horrid Consequences of the Fact set her Crime above all Estimation; to Bastardize a Family, and perhaps to wrong her own Children of their Paternal Inheritance; to take off the Father's Love from his own Children, and make him look upon them all as an uncertain, if not a spurious Progeny; to cause him to deny a sufficient Maintenance even to his true-born Sons, and perhaps to leave them poor and succourless in the midst of his Affluence. These are such miserable and fatal Events of this Crime, that she that, notwithstanding all this, shall engage upon it, must, one would think, have divested herself of all the Tenderness of her Sex, and have put on a sort of a devilish Cruelty, thus to offer to him, in requital of his Love and Kindness, such an irreparable and insupportable Injury.

3. *The Contemner of the World ought to be of a modest Behaviour.* I shall not here nicely examine upon what Account Mankind alone, of all the Creation, has acquired that Modesty and Shame-facedness about *Venereal Matters*, altho' I cannot subscribe to *Charron*'s Opinion, who will have it only to proceed from Custom and Design, to raise

Modest Behaviour.

our Appetites the higher after those Things which we see purposely hid from us; but I think rather, that it arose chiefly from the Lapse of Mankind, who were not till then *ashamed of their Nakedness*, till Sin had raised in them such disorderly Appetites and Inclinations, to which they were greater Strangers before; at the Thoughts whereof they were confounded themselves, and did endeavour, as much as they could, to hide them from the Knowledge of others. But be this as it will, every Man finds within himself a natural Desire to skreen over with Silence every thing in relation to these Matters; and we see that those People that have laid aside this natural Shamefacedness, and given themselves up to *obscene Talk* and *Actions*, have been always accounted some of the greatest Monsters in Nature, that have offer'd more Violence to her, than any Man beside. And therefore it is observed, that in all civiliz'd Nations this Practice has been used only by the meanest and basest sort of People; but those of a more refined Education have had the utmost Abhorrence of it. And we may farther observe, that nothing is so great a Guard to Vertue as Modesty is; for oftentimes, when the Devil has made himself Master of all the other Fences, this holds out the

the very last: And therefore Men should be very cautious of abandoning that Hold which is oftentimes stronger than Reason and Grace together. And indeed, if we should set this single Passion aside, Mankind would become a Herd of Goats and Satyrs; there would be no Order or Government, no Distinction of Blood or Families, no Care or Provision for Children, but the whole Race of rational Beings would become more Beasts than the Cattle of the Field. And this seems to me to be the Reason why God did implant (since the Fall at least) this Pudicity in Mankind alone; because he designed Matrimonial Co-habitation, and a Distinction of Families amongst Men, which he did not among Beasts, when he allowed them promiscuous Commixtures. Now, this natural Shamefacedness is as it were Nature's Check to all rash and precipitate Love, which being afforded in a greater Degree to the Female Sex, does respite any indiscreet and unequal Proposals among young People, till such time as the more mature and wiser Judgment of Parents may interpose. Therefore I much wonder why so many of our Youth of both Sexes should purposely endeavour, by a vicious Conversation, and an affected bold Deportment, to destroy their inbred Modesty, which is so

very natural, and withal so very beautiful to behold; for Impudence, tho' it cannot blush, is ten times more ugly and shameful than the greatest Shamefacedness. So *Diogenes*, seeing a young Man troubled at his being put out of Countenance by a confident Man, *Be not concerned*, says he; *for this is the Colour of Vertue.* But I am afraid, a great many think Vertue to be of another Colour, when they make all their Actions to look of so different a Hue: For how can one reconcile with natural Modesty those obscene Jests, which are the Themes of so many Virgin Tongues; who take themselves to be most *Witty* when they are most *bold*, and do only *laugh* at that which should in all Reason make them *blush?* It is a sad Sign of the prevailing Immodesty of the Age, that one can hardly hear a good Tune, but the Obscenity of the Words is more grating to the Ears, than the Musick is melodious. Our common Dances are a sort of Anti-Pyrrhick ones, and resemble the Camp of *Venus*, as the others did those of *Mars.* Nay, our very Makers and Actors of Plays are wont to excuse the Immodesty of them by the Humour of the Age, which will bear nothing more serious; and hardly any thing is more common, than to see Persons of reputed Vertue and Honour, to sit admir-

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ring Spectators at such Plays, from which *Cato* would have run away faster than from the *Floralia*; nay farther, in some Places it is accounted a piece of Breeding, and a taking Quality, in the Prophet's Phrase, to have *Eyes full of Adultery*; where the Looks and Actions of Virgins are frequently such, as would in ancient Times have deflowred a Vestal. But hold! It is not my Business here to write a Satyr upon the Age, but only to recommend Modesty, which we ought to shew in all our Words and Actions, not to speak any thing which doth in the least savour of Filthiness or Obscenity, rather to lose our Jest than our Reputation, and to part with a lewd Company sooner than our own Innocence; to use no Actions which betoken any Lasciviousness or Impurity, but rather to choose to be taxed with an ill-bred Shamefacedness, than with an unchristian Impudence.

SECT. IV.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Humble.

A Proud Man can never be said to Contemn the World, although, perhaps, he Contemns every Man in it: The World is his Kingdom, in which he has Enthroned himself, and therefore expects

all that dwell therein should do him Homage. The proud Man, tho' he may sometimes chance to despise Riches or Sensual Pleasures, yet Honour is such a Deity that he must adore, for the sake of which he will forfeit his Innocence and Integrity, his Quiet and Content, altho' it be but Imaginary; therefore such a Man is as *Carnally Minded*, and as far from the *Contempt of the World*, as the greatest Miser or Voluptuary in it. But the humble Christian, that with a modest Resignation submits himself to the Divine Pleasure, that retains but indifferent Thoughts of his own self, and pays all due Preference and Respect to others, may truly be said to contemn the World, with its Pomps and Vanities, which so great a Part of Mankind do Idolize.

Now, to contemn the World by our *Humility*, it is requisite,

1. *That we should retain the meanest Thoughts of ourselves we possibly can, in respect of Almighty God*; for there is that infinite Distance between an Almighty Creator who is all Fulness, and a frail Creature, that no Humiliation can be sufficient, in any relation between him and us. Therefore, whenever *we pray to him*, we must not come like the Pharisee, *Luk.* xviii. with big Thoughts of our own Vertues and Per-

Performances, but approach him with the utmoſt Abaſement of ourſelves, the greateſt Reverence and Proſtration of Soul, and the higheſt Admiration of the divine Excellencies; as the holy Patriarch did, *Gen.* xviii. 27. *Behold, I have taken upon me to ſpeak unto the Lord, who am but Duſt and Aſhes.* Or, as the holy Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* lxii. *My Soul truly waiteth upon God, for of him cometh my Salvation. Pour out your Hearts before him, for God is our Hope. As for the Children of Men, they are but Vanity, they are deceitful upon the weights, they are altogether lighter than Vanity itſelf.* So likewiſe, *in all the Revelations which God is pleaſed to make of Himſelf and his Will to us*, we ought with all *humble* Readineſs and Submiſſion to embrace them, without conſulting with the Niceties of our Reaſon, and our own Fleſh and Blood, whether we ſhall believe them or no. We muſt not, with the Jews, who when God had promiſed them the *Holy Land*, and Victory over the *Canaanites*, ſay, *We be not able to go up againſt the People, for they are ſtronger than we*, Numb. xiii. 31. We muſt not diffide with *Sarah* and *Zacharias*, becauſe *they were old, and ſtricken in Years*, Gen. xviii. 12. Luk. i. 18. We muſt not with *Nicodemus*, when Chriſt reveals Truths to us, ask *how can theſe Things be?* Joh. iii. 9. But, whatſoever God is

pleased to impart to our Knowledge, or to promise to our Hopes, we must with an humble Faith and Assurance rely upon his Holy Word; we must not with an haughty Disdain deny the Truth, because it doth not comport with the Maxims of our weak Reason, or slight the Promise, because the Greatness of it is above our Expectation, and the Ways of effecting it beyond our Comprehension. We ought rather to consider, that 'tis the God of Truth that speaks to us, and therefore who cannot impose a Falsity upon us; that He is a God of incomprehensible Being, of an immense and infinite Knowledge, and that therefore we should not measure his mysterious Nature by the Scantiness of our Understanding; that He is a God of an unbounded Power, who can with Ease obviate all occurring Difficulties; who can make all seeming Contrarieties conspire together for our Advantage, and for the making good of his Promise; and who therefore cannot fail us. So likewise in *praising God*, and returning Thanks to him for Mercies received, we cannot perform our Duty better, than by an *humble Acknowledgment* that all the good Things we enjoy, do proceed from his Bounty and Favour. For, as for Pride, that possesses a Man with so much Ingratitude, that he had

had rather impute his Success and Felicity to Second Causes, than to the All-wise Direction of God's Providence: Therefore, whenever we partake of the Divine Favours, by delivering us either from Calamities, or by bestowing Blessings upon us, we must not, like *Jesurun, wax fat and kick, and lightly esteem the Rock of our Salvation*, Deut. xxxii. 15. Or, like the Israelites, *forget the Lord their God, who had done so great Things for them*, Psal. cvi. And as God, by the Prophet *Hosea*, speaks of *Ephraim, Their Heart was exalted, therefore have they forgotten me*, Hos. xiii. 6. We must not with the proud King of *Assyria*, say, *By the Strength of my Hand I have done it, and by my Wisdom, for I am prudent*, Isa. x. 13. But we must with an humble Gratitude acknowledge that all the good Things we enjoy, do proceed from God Almighty's Bounty; that our Wisdom was too short, and our Endeavours too frail to effect so advantageous a Blessing; that our Contrivances might have failed in a thousand Particulars, if the Divine Concurrence had not assisted them; that we had never prosecuted so proper Methods, if the *Wisdom which is from above* had not enlightned our Understandings, and further'd our Counsels and Debates; that he might have blasted our Designs in the first Enterprize, or might have suffered us to

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have attempted such Projects, as might have ended in our own Ruin and Destruction. We ought not to think that *it was for our Righteousness, or for the Uprightness of our Heart, that God has done this great Thing for us*, Deut. ix. 5. for what can we wretched Sinners claim at God's Hands, when our repeated Crimes have merited so many Punishments, rather than Favours, of him? But we ought to acknowledge, that altho' we had been never so innocent, no Thanks could have been sufficient for them, because they had been so freely bestow'd; but when they are so bountifully given to them, who have deserved so much worse Treatment, we ought to admire and adore the munificent Hand which so liberally conveyed them to us. And in this Strain of an humble Gratitude, we find the pious Saints of Old commemorating the Divine Mercies and Benefits. So holy *Jacob*, Gen. xxxii. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of the Mercies which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant; for with my Staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two Bands.* So the devout Psalmist, *Who am I, and what is my People? for all Things come from thee, and of thy own have we given thee*, 1 Chron. xxix. 14. And lastly, we ought with an *humble Submission to bear whatsoever Afflictions God is pleased to lay upon us.* We must not

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in a Fitt of Impatience say, *God is cruel unto us*, Job xxx. 21. we must not repent us of our Service to him, as they did, who cried, *What Profit is it to serve the Lord?* but we ought rather, under the severest Calamities, with old *Eli*, to say, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 *Sam.* iii. 18. or, with holy *Job*, *What, shall we receive good Things at the Hand of God, and shall we not receive Evil?* Job ii. 10. So that whenever God thinks fit to send his Scourge to chastise us for our Faults, our *Humility* will teach us not with a stomachful Rage to fly in the Face of our kind Parent, who designs, by his seeming Severity, our greatest Benefit; but will make us acknowledge, that our Sins have merited a far sharper Tryal, and that it is the Goodness of God, that he is pleased to accept so slight a Punishment, for so heinous Offences; that he does not *delight in plaguing us*, and that he *will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able*; that our Afflictions serve only to refine our Vertue, and to give it a greater Lustre in this World, or else to make our Crowns shine brighter in the other.

2. *He that contemns the World, ought not to be proud of any Gifts whatsoever, which God has bestowed upon him.* There is nothing

Not to be proud of God's Gifts.

thing in the World looks with a greater Face of Folly and Impudence, than for a Man to vaunt, and swagger, and look big, upon something which all the World knows is none of his own. It were an Impudence intolerable for a Beggar to strut about in a borrowed Livery, and to dispute his Gentility with those that knew who had furnished him out with those Habiliments. Nor would it be more Modesty for a Servant to set a Value upon himself, and to despise his Fellows, only because his Master had deposited a little of his Money in his Hand; and which he might reasonably expect would be every Minute called in. Now, if we consider, there is not any thing which Men usually pride themselves in, but they have as little Reason to do it, as in any of these Instances. For of all the Things that we do enjoy, and which are used so to swell our Minds, what is there that we can in a true and proper Sense call our own, that we ourselves have the absolute Command of, and the Enjoyment of which does not depend upon the Good Will and Pleasure of Almighty God? *Beauty* and *Strength* are things, alas! which too many value themselves upon, as if they were to be for ever entail'd upon them; as if they were subject to no Contingencies, but were wholly exempt from the Jurisdiction

ction of Him, who is the great Conducter and Manager of all humane Affairs. But, tho' *our Beauty be*, as the Scripture ſpeaks, *like the green Olive-Tree*, and tho' we be *ſtronger than Lions*; yet, when it pleaſeth God to withdraw theſe Bleſſings, 'tis but ſending a Diſeaſe, and *he maketh our Beauty to conſume away, like as it were a Moth fretting a Garment*, and (as the Prophet *Ezekiel* ſpeaks) *he maketh our Hands feeble, and our Knees as weak as Water*. Tho' we had all the Affluence of *Riches* that our Natures could enjoy, or our Hearts could deſire, yet theſe would be all ſo uncertain and vaniſhing, that what was here to-day, might be gone to-morrow; tho' to-day they might ſeem *numberleſs as the Sands of the Sea*, yet to-morrow we *might ſeek them, and they are no-where to be found*.— How many flouriſhing Eſtates do we every day ſee, by ſome croſs Accidents, moulder and crumble away into Nothing? How may we daily obſerve an under-working Providence, to daſh all our Deſigns of laying up Wealth, and improving our Eſtates, and, notwithſtanding the utmoſt of our Endeavours, to make thoſe vaſt Poſſeſſions, which we had been ſo long heaping together, to vaniſh of a ſudden; and to cauſe that mighty Fortune, which we thought, alas! to entail

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for ever upon our Posterity, to decay and die before ourselves?

How often do we see Men, that stand upon the very Pinacle of *Honour*, that *sit on the Right-hand of Princes*, and walk along through the bowing Crowd, that have all the Elogiums and Praises of good Men, and all the Cringes and Flattery of the bad? How often do we see these tumbling down into Disgrace and Contempt, by a Blast only, perhaps, of popular Rumour, by the Frowns of an offended Prince, or by the undermining Practices of an aspiring Favourite? But, altho' it should happen, that we should be such Darlings of Fortune, as never to experience her Frowns, but to run thro' a Life of perfect Calm and Sunshine; tho' our Riches should accompany us even to the Grave, and tho' we should die full of Honour; yet there we must take our Leave of all this gaudy Pageantry; when we go into the other World, we must leave behind us all these Things we have been making such a Scramble for in this; thither we must go naked, and stripp'd of all these Gaieties, and leave them to go to God knows whom, and God knows where. Now, let the reasonable Man consider, if he can with any Confidence be proud of such fleeting Enjoyments, that are frequently

quently shorter than our Lives are, that for the most part leave us, or it is but a little while, and we must leave them. With what Modesty can we swell ourselves, and contemn others, upon account of such borrowed Goods, which every one knows we could never procure ourselves at first, nor can secure the Possession of them one Minute longer? And we have as little Reason, God knows, to be proud of the Goods of the Mind, and those Things which we presume to call *Intellectual Perfections*. Indeed, our Philosophy has been so vain, as to reckon these among the τὰ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, Things in our Power, that we can controul and dispose of at our Pleasure; in which, they tell us, we may be Gods to ourselves, and enjoy an unlimited Authority over them. But if we scan over all the Excellencies of the Mind, both natural and acquired, we may easily be convinced, that they are, in a manner, as precarious as those of the Body, and as much depending upon Almighty Goodness, as Plenty of Riches, or the beautiful Contexture of our bodily Organs. For, tho' we should be *wiser than the Aged*, endow'd with the most ready Wit, and the most penetrating Judgment, tho' we had dived into all the mysterious Truths of Nature and Religion, yet it is GOD alone, to whom the Praise

Praiſe is due; 'tis He, whoſe bountiful Goodneſs has beſtow'd upon us ſuch liberal Talents; and He, when His All-wiſe Providence ſhall think fit, can withdraw them again from us. *For the Lord* (as *Solomon* ſpeaks) *giveth Wiſdom, and out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge and Underſtanding*, Prov. ii. 6. And holy *Job* tells us, *Job* xxxii. 8. *But there is a Spirit in Man, and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth him Underſtanding.* The profoundeſt Wiſdom of the moſt Sage Politicians is but a glimmering Ray of his Eternal Wiſdom, which, whenever he thinks fit to with-draw, or obſcure, and to leave them to themſelves, they do nothing then, but reaſon themſelves into Danger, and all their fair Plots and Contrivances are but ſo many Stratagems turn'd againſt their own Cauſe. However they may pride themſelves in their dark Counſels, and deep-laid Deſigns, when *they ſay in their Heart who ſhall ſee it?* yet God, whoſe *Fooliſhneſs is wiſer than Men*, He *bringeth the Wiſdom of the Heathen to nought, and turneth the Counſel of* Achitophel *into Fooliſhneſs.* By a Blaſt of his Diſpleaſure, he can daſh all their Projects into Nothing, and turn all the beſt-formed Deſigns into Ruin and Confuſion. Nay, farther, how often may we ſee many of thoſe great States-men, upon whoſe

whose Management the Fates of Princes and Nations have turn'd; and others, whose Parts and Industry have made an exact Survey of all Arts and Sciences? How often may we see many of these great Men, not only *to die as a Fool dieth*, but for some time to live so too; whose Parts have left 'em on this side the Grave, and who have not only lost their mighty Talents of Wisdom and Learning, but even the ordinary Gifts of our common Nature? Let me then, a little, apply myself to those whom God has endowed with these Excellent Qualities; is it the Part of a wise Man, to pride himself in that, which, tho' he has it to-day, it may be gone to-morrow? Is it a thing becoming those that have so long studied Knowledge and Experience, to value themselves upon a little superficial Knowledge of some few Things about us here, which can last but some thirty or forty Years at the most, and then must be eternally buried in Oblivion?

But, of all Prides, that which seems to confront Heaven most, is the *spiritual one*; this is a Sin of the most hardened Impudence, that, with all its Blackness of Guilt about it, can demurely plead its own Innocence, and set up for Sanctity with the Qualification of a Devil. Other Sins, as

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conscious of their own Guilt, and their deserved Punishment, dread the Almighty's Vengeance, and fly his Presence; but this, like its Father the Devil, in the Book of *Job*, comes among the *Sons of God, and presents itself before the Lord*: This, instead of shunning him, dares oppose him to his Face; instead of fearing Punishment, expects Commendation. Now, when the Holy Scripture informs us, that it is *God that worketh in us both to will and to do*, and that *of ourselves we are not able to think a good Thought*; what Impudence is it, to be Proud and Haughty upon the Free Grace of God, which, *like the Wind, bloweth where it listeth*; and to despise others, upon whom God has not bestowed such plentiful Effusions? Surely, Men must be past all Modesty, to pretend to be the peculiar Children of God, to boast themselves of extraordinary Talents of Grace, and to despise all the World which have not the same Confidence with them, as *Heathens* and *Publicans*; and yet, notwithstanding all this, to make themselves to be the purest Members of that Holy Religion, whose greatest Characteristicks are *Meekness* and *Humility*.

To slight Precedency, &c.

3. *He that contemns the World, ought not to seek after little Punctilio's of Honour, Titles, Precedency, and the like.* As

As for other Points of Pride, there is more Reason to be shewn for them than for this; for he that is proud of Beauty, or Wit, or a good Estate, has something to shew for it; but he that prides himself to take Place of another, to be called by some worshipful Name he is fond of, does take up, methinks, with the Pride of *Bedlam*; where the poor Folks strut about with Tinsel and Feathers, and stand admiring and staring at their own Shadows. What a foolish, as well as wicked Wretch was *Haman*, in the Book of *Esther*, who would venture his Honour, his Fortune, and his Life itself, only to force a poor *Jew* to give him the Leg? And whoever puts himself to any Trouble, to gain the like Observances, is not one Jot the wiser. For to attempt this and miscarry, is but to expose ourselves to the Mirth and Scorn of others; and if we are so happy as to succeed, the Success will hardly compensate the Trouble. For, what Difference is there between the Air of the Right-hand, or that of the Left? a Man may breathe in one as well as the other, and if either of the two will do him more Harm, it is probably that which is most curst. One may have the same Chear when he sits fourth at Table, as if he sate first; and may have as good a Stomach too, if his Pride does not spoil

ſpoil it, as he would, if he ſate higher. But, however, altho' a Man can be ſuch a Fool as to value theſe Things, yet Pride is the worſt Method he can take to effect it: To ſeek for Precedency, is the ſureſt way to loſe it; and People will generally court a modeſt humble Man to take that Place, which they refuſe to the proud aſpiring one: Which is the Obſervation of our Bleſſed Saviour; *Whoſoever will be Chief among you, let him be your Servant*, Matt. xx. 27. And again, *When thou art bidden to a Wedding, go and ſit down in the loweſt Room, that when he that bade thee cometh, he may ſay unto thee, Friend, go up higher*, Luk. xiv. 10. Not that our Saviour would have us affect Humility, and to debaſe ourſelves out of a politick Deſign of Exaltation and Advancement; but that if we be truly humble in this reſpect, we have this additional Encouragement to our Duty, *viz.* the *Honour of Men*, as well as the *Praiſe* and *Reward of God*.

Not to affect Things above us.

4. For an humble *Contempt of the World* it is requiſite, *That we ſhould not affect Things above our Abilities and Circumſtances*. For,

1. The proud Man is always out-ſhooting his Mark, and wading beyond his Depth; he is for meddling with Things he doth not underſtand, and is for giving

giving his Judgment in Matters he does not comprehend; he is for undertaking Business he is not able to perform, and all out of a vain Opinion he has conceived of his own Parts and Abilities. Indeed, the Nation is strangely pestered with these self-conceited Opiniators, that leave their Calling to let their Heads run upon new Schemes and Platforms of Government; whose Education has hardly been beyond the Anvil, and yet they would fain be tinkering the Church and State. Of such kind of People the Apostle speaks, 1 *Tim.* i. 7. *who desired to be Teachers of the Law, when they understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed.* And truly we should be well taught and governed by such Mens Rules, who are so far from understanding Teaching and Government, that they understand not what they say. But the *humble Man*, like the good *Psalmist*, *exercises not himself in great Matters, nor in Things that are too high for him*: He makes the Sphere of his Action within his own Knowledge; he leaves great Matters for wiser Heads; he does not *begin to build, when he is not able to finish*; he considers that the Business of his own Calling, and the Saving of his own Soul, is Work enough for him, so as not to trouble himself with other Mens Business, which he has little Time

for, and which he left understands. 2. So again, the proud Man is always endeavouring to live above what his Income will maintain, he is ambitious to vye Expences with Men of the largest Fortunes, to ape the Sumptuousness of some great Person, whose Estate his falls much short of; to make a mighty Blaze with costly Entertainments, rich Furniture, and a splendid Equipage, at a Time when his Fortune perhaps is running at the lowest Ebb. But Humility teaches a Man to live within those Circumstances God has placed him in; so that he is content to live up to the Quality of his own Condition, and does not care to ruin himself, to make other People, for some time, fancy he is rich; and this makes him willing to take up with the ordinary Respect which is due to his Condition, without spending his Estate to gain a flashy Repute, which will at last end in Scorn and vile Contempt. 3. It again teaches us not to pride ourselves in our Apparel, or to wear Cloaths which are unsuitable to our Circumstances, or above our Condition. One could hardly think, that Mankind could degenerate into so much Senselessness and Folly, as we find so many Men are; to value themselves upon the outward Habiliments and Covering of their Body, and to despise all others, who

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have not the Fortune, or the Vanity to get so tawdry a Case for theirs. The Body itself is but the Shell, or the Cabinet for the Soul, or the *Vessel*, as S. *Paul* calls it; and therefore that which we wrap about the Body, must certainly be a Thing too vile to pride ourselves upon. To be proud of Wit or Learning, is something tollerable, in respect of this; but to be proud of fine Cloaths, is as silly as to over-look the Jewel, whilst we admire the Case. But for those to be fond of them, who have not Fortune enough to attain them, who cannot make themselves fine without making themselves poor, is *Solomon's Vanity of Vanities* with a Witness; and they, of all People in the World, do least deserve to be pitied, who are so vain as to starve their own Bellies, to feed other People's Eyes by gazing on them. I would not be mis-understood, as if I thought the Office of Cloaths was not as well to distinguish Qualities, as to defend us from the Weather; for certainly, Persons of better Rank ought to wear better and costlier Apparel; but it ought not to be sillily Fanciful, or prodigiously Expensive. The most Honourable and Wealthy should not wear that upon their Backs, which would build Cities, and ransom Kings, as some have done. But for People of a meaner

Rank, they ought to be more plain and frugal in their Attire, for God has placed them in a lower Condition, and therefore for them to counterfeit an higher, is to repine and murmur at his good Providence, and oftentimes to sacrifice the Well-being of themselves and Families, to this foolish and unaccountable Vanity.

Obedience and Respect to Superiors.

5. The humble Contemner of the World *ought to obey and respect his Superiors.* It is observable, that those proud Men in S. *Jude*, who *speak the great swelling Words*, are the same *that speak Evil of Dignities*, and who are *Murmurers and Complainers*. And, if we take a View of all the factious and discontented People in the State, of all the Schisms in the Church, of all rebellious Children, and disobedient Servants; we shall find, that all these wicked Disorders are bottomed mostly upon Pride. One thinks himself too much a Statesman to be governed by any body else, and that Things will never go well unless he were advanced to the Helm of Affairs, and attributes all the Miscarriages which happen, to the not following his Projects. The Ringleaders, in almost all Rebellions, have been but some proud discontented Spirits, who could not brook a Disgrace from their Lawful Prince, or the Disappoint-

Disappointment of a Preferment. *Arius* and *Novatianus*, are two remarkable Instances in Church-History, of Men that broached their Heresies, because they missed those Ecclesiastical Dignities they pretended to. And I doubt not, if we were to anatomize the present Schisms from our National Church, we should quickly find, that the Non-compliance (of our more knowing Dissenters especially, and where Interest is not concerned) proceeds only from this, that they scorn to own themselves to have so long continued in an Error, and that they cannot brook to comply with those Ceremonies they have so unreasonably, and so stiffly opposed. Nay, all the disobedient Children and Servants we ever knew, have chiefly been tempted to this Sin, by the Haughtiness of their Minds, by their Disdaining to submit to the Discretion of others, by thinking themselves *wiser than their Teachers*. S. *Peter*, when he enjoins *the Younger to be subject to the Elder*, he adds, *and be ye clothed with Humility*, 1 Pet. v. 5. as well knowing that this Duty of *Humility* is the greatest Motive to that of *Obedience*. For the Man of a modest humble Mind thinks that his Superiors do better understand the Art of Governing, than he; that there are some secret Springs of their Actions, which

he is not let into; that Success does not always answer to the best laid Designs; and that it is better to accuse his own Ignorance in such Affairs, than their Abilities, or Sincerity. Such an one can, with Temper and Resignation, suffer his Prince to take back into his Hands a Place of Honour or Advantage, or to deny him a requested Favour: He considers he ought rather to pay his Gratitude for the gracious Bounty which bestowed it at first, and continued it so long, and not to meditate Revenge upon him, because he is bountiful no longer; he thinks with himself, that it is some Defect in his Qualifications, or that he has not yet enough merited the Favour he desired. So likewise, Humility doth bound the Ambition of aspiring Church-men, makes them leave the Judgment of their Merits to those whom the Laws have entrusted with Preferments; it keeps them from making importunate Solicitations and Addresses to Great Men, and teaches them to bear a Repulse with Meekness and Acquiescence; it puts them upon Enquiry, whether their Piety and Learning were equal to the Greatness of their Competition, and so for the Future makes them double their Diligence, that their Defects may be no longer a Bar to their Preferment. It teaches Children to

honour

honour and obey their Parents, by considering, that their Age and Experience in the World has endowed them with a greater Share of Prudence; and therefore that it is more fitting to govern their Actions by their Advice and Direction, than by their own green Understandings: It instructs Servants to pay all dutiful Obedience to their Masters, by putting them in mind, that it is unreasonable to dispute their Commands, whose Subjection they have placed themselves under; to think that their Disobedience is more irrational than their Master's Injunctions, who are to be supposed to understand their own Business best. Now, if all Men would endeavour to square their Actions by these Rules, which Humility doth suggest, what glorious Times, or what Halcyon Days should we behold! what Ease and Quiet to the Government, what Peace and Tranquillity to the State, how much Charity and Piety would reign in the Church, what Fidelity would be found at Court, and what Heartiness and Obedience in City and Country! If we should all do our Utmost in the Performance of our Duty, we should find such a strange Reformation in all Things of Publick Concern and Private Order and Obedience; so much Peace, and Love, and Unity, so much Security,

Advantage, and Prosperity, that we should in a manner be perswaded, like the People of *Lystra*, that *the Gods were come down to us in the Likeness of Men*, Act. xiv. 11.

6. To continue the World by Humility, we must behave ourselves courteously and obligingly towards our Inferiors, of what Condition soever.

Courteous to Inferiors.

If we are placed in a Post of Publick Justice, we must have a Care of Entertaining any Respect of Persons, we must distribute Justice as equally to the Poorest Litigant, as to the most Opulent and Honourable; for God gives it, as a most special Command, to all in such Authority, that they *relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, and plead for the Widow*, Isa. i. 17. *To defend the Poor and Fatherless, and to do Justice to the Afflicted and Needy*, Psal. lxxxii. 3. And he denounces the most terrible Judgments against those *that judge unjustly, and accept the Persons of the Wicked*, Psal. lxxxii. 2. Against those *that beat his People to pieces, and grind the Face of the Poor*, Isa. iii. 15. That *have dealt by Oppression with the Stranger, and vexed the Fatherless and Widow*, Ezek. xxii. 7. Nay, if the Line of Justice be to be stretched on any side, by a favourable Opinion and Construction, it ought to be in favour of the poorest Party, who can be least supposed to be

be guilty of Fraud and Artifice; and whom should we make to forego his Right, it would not only be unjust, but inhumane and cruel. And so in other Cases, when those that are our Inferiors desire our Speech, our Advice, or our Relief, we ought to give them an easy Access, and a kind Admittance. We ought not to entrench ourselves within obscure and remote Apartments, and to set a Guard of surly Servants to keep out all Addresses and Applications that are made to us: For really it is one of the most unreasonable, and most unjust things in the World, to deny a Man before he can be heard, and to refuse his Petition without knowing what it is. It is a Shame to see, how much the great Men of our Times have fell beneath the Generosity of the Grandees in the *Roman* State. They looked upon it as the greatest Glory they could arrive to, to be Patrons to the distressed *Plebeians*, tho' of the meanest Rank; they made it their Business to court and win over Clients into their Patronage; they bravely extended their Protection, not only to private Men, to Families and Tribes, but even to whole Provinces and Countries: They accounted this to be a new Beam of Honour, which shone upon them with far greater Lustre than their ancient Titles; and many, by defend-

ing an injured Client, have thought they have fairly an equal Honour with a triumphing General. Read but the Historics of those Times, and see what a World of Good was done to the People by the *Lentuli* and *Antonii*, by the *Cato's* and *Cæsars*; and what an expended Beneficence they did afford. And then again, consider what a few Imitators they have among the great Men of our Age; many of whom wrap themselves up like Hedge-Hogs, within their own Prickles, place so many Janitors and Centinels about them, on purpose to keep them even from the Temptation of doing Good. So again, when we converse with our Inferiors, we ought to shew a due Courteousness and Obligingness in our Discourse, and to be far from all morose and insolent Treatment. There is no Reason to think, that we should rail at, and miscall our poor Fellow-Christians worse than we do our Dogs, or return ill Language to them, who approach us with all Submission and Respect: For by the Rights of Common Humanity, the poorest Man may claim from us civil Usage; and to treat him otherways, is an Affront offered to Humane Nature, which all Mankind stand obliged to resent. And of this the Honourable *Romans* were so very sensible, that when they were in Places of great

Business,

Business, in which they were obliged to converse with a Multitude of the Citizens, they were wont to keep their Nomenclator, which was a Servant, who continually stood by them to give them the Name of all Persons who came to them, to the end that they might salute them with all possible Familiarity, and endeavour to be beforehand with them in the Compliment. 'Tis notable Advice, that of the wise Son of *Syrach*, *Let it not grieve thee to bow down thine Ear to the Poor, and give him a Friendly Answer with Meekness*, Ecclus. iv. 8. And if great Men did consider how they divested themselves into the Love of ordinary People by a courteous Behaviour to them, what fast Hold they took of their Hearts by good Words, a serene Brow, and a pleasing Countenance; how an humble Deportment, without any Favour, does oblige Men, and how an haughty one does turn a Benefit into an Affront; how Men, as well as God, do resist and despise the Proud; how they admire the Free and Courteous, and how their Tongues ring in their Commendation; and especially, did they consider how easily and cheap all this is done, they would certainly at least counterfeit the Humble Man, by this Means to grow Great.

SECT. V.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in being Patient.

WHenever the World frowns upon a Man, if he shew a Restlesness and an Impatience under his Afflictions, we may be sure he rather loves the World than despises it, because he is so disconsolate when it is unkind to him. It is a certain Sign he is captivated with the Charms of it, when he cannot bear its Disappointments. Therefore every one that does desire to contemn the World, must take care to attain to the Vertue of Patience in all its Particulars. Now Patience being a Vertue that consists *in bearing Afflictions and Calamities with an equal and constant Mind*; and whereas Afflictions may arise either from the Loss of a *Good*, or by the Presence of some *Evil*; he that would duly contemn the World, ought with all due Temper and Resignation to bear the Loss of all those *good* Things God shall think fit to deprive him of, and *patiently* to rest under the *evil ones*, he shall think fit to lay upon him.

1. Now the *Loss of Good* which a Man may sustain, may be either *present*, such as the Loss of *Estate*, *Relations*, *Friends*, or *Good Name*; or else in *Expectation*, as the Loss of

of *Honour* or *Preferment*, or the Disappointment in our Children, &c. 2. So again, Troubles and Vexations may arise from the *Presence of Evil*, such as proceed from some *Difficulties* we may encounter with, from the *Infirmities* and *Ignorance* of those about us, from *Affronts* which may be given us, and from *Diseases* and *Persecutions* which may befal us. Now 'tis the part of every Christian, to fortify himself by an invincible Patience against all these Calamities, which arise either

1. *From the Loss of Good*; or
2. *From the Presence of any Evil.*

1. *He that would contemn the World aright, ought to bear quietly the Loss of his Goods or Estate.* We ought not to repine and murmur, when God thinks fit to reduce us to Poverty, or lessen our Income; not to question his Providence, or to distrust his Mercy, but to think that he is willing to make all things work together for our Good; that he does it either to chastise us for our Sins, or to make a Trial of our Faith; that we may be happy under his Protection, as well poor as rich; that we are more like to grow better, when we have such awakening Judgments to amend our Lives, and so much less Temptation to Sin; that God will either again be more

In Loss of our Estate.

more bountiful to us in this World, or will provide better for us in the next. But enough of this has been said in the second Section.

Friends. 2. *Our Contempt of the World ought to endure patiently the Loss of Relations and Friends.* It is indeed, to Flesh and Blood, very sad and dismal, to reflect upon the Loss of a loving Parent, a dutiful Child, a dear Friend, or bountiful Benefactor; but yet, the Loss of these ought not so to overwhelm our Minds with Grief, as to make us to act contrary to the Light of our Reason, to the Dignity of our Nature, and the Duty we owe to God. We ought not, as the Apostle says, *to sorrow as Men without Hope*; trusting, that tho' we labour here *in the Valley of Tears*, yet they *rest from their Labours*, and *sleep in the Lord*. What tho' I have lost a kind and indulgent Father, that has made me the *Son of his Right Hand*, the Glory of his Eyes, and the Darling of his Affections; tho' I am bereft of a tender Mother that bore me in her Womb, and foster'd me in her Bosom? yet as long as *the Lord is my Shepherd, I can lack nothing*, and *when my Father and Mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up*. We must consider, that this is a Debt which must once be paid to Nature, that it is but what all Men as well as they must

must undergo; that this was no more than what Nature itself designed, by ordering us to be born of them to supply their Room, when they should be taken hence; that God has allotted them a greater Share of Life than the generality of the World, by suffering them to live to such a competent Age, as to leave a Progeny behind them here, whereas more die before that Time, than live beyond it. Am I deprived of a loving and a careful Wife, *the Wife of my Youth, and the Companion of my Bosom?* I must consider, that it was God who provided me first of this Blessing; that he is the same God still, *yesterday, to day, and for ever*; that *his Hand is not shortned*, and that he can make up this Loss with other Satisfactions; that we were not born into the World together, and therefore it must be expected that one must go before. Have we lost a good and dutiful Child, the Comfort of our Life, and the Hopes of our Family? We are not over-much to bewail our Misfortune, because it has happened for his Good. God himself has adopted him into a better Inheritance than we could have provided for him, and has adorned him with one of the Virgin Crowns of Heaven, as a Reward of his early Piety, *Rev.* xiv. 4. Were not our Hearts, whilst he lived, too much set upon him?

And

And did we not too much love and admire the Creature to the Neglect of the Creator? Was it not necessary to have this Bar removed, to have our Love return into its true Channel? Had not God before tried many ineffectual Scourges and Corrections, to bring us to Repentance, till at last he was forced to rouze up our sleeping Consciences, like the *Ægyptians*, by such an amazing Judgment, as the *smiting our first-born?* So that all this may be the Effect of God's Love and Tenderness for the Salvation of our Souls, and therefore ought to be repaid, by a Thankfulness and an Acknowledgment of his Mercy, and not by repining at his Providence. Have we a dear *Friend* snatched away from us by our unexpected Death, whose Love, like *Jonathan's*, *was very pleasant unto us, wonderful, and passing the Love of Women?* Yet God, our best Friend, will remain with us, his Friendship can be ended by no Period of Time, nor can be equalled by any Mortal Affection; *for he so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son to die for us.* Shall we bemoan and hanker after the senseless Ashes of a departed Friend, and neglect to repay our Love to the ever blessed Jesus, that Miracle of Love and Friendship, *who so loved us, as to lay down his Life for us?* Have we lost a bounti-

tiful

tiful *Benefactor*, who has hitherto liberally rewarded our Industry, and upon whose Munificence we still depended for farther Advantage? It is true, we can never pay Acknowledgment enough to the Memory of so noble a Friend, and we must write the Sense of his Kindnesses upon our Hearts in indelible Characters; but we ought not by that to distrust God's Providence, and to let our Gratitude run over the great original Cause of our Happiness, only by fixing our Eyes upon the *blessed Instrument* of his Goodness. We should consider, that it was a signal Token of God's Kindness to us, that our Benefactor made such early Provision for us, and that he remembred us before he went to the *Grave, where all Things are forgotten.*

3. *He ought not to be impatient or dejected for the Loss of his good Name.* *Under Slander.* It is, perhaps, one of the killingest Griefs which can befall a Man, to lose his Reputation in the World, to have all Peoples Tongues sounding in his Reproach which he has not in the least merited, and to be *laying to his Charge Things which he never did.* But he must consider, that this is the common Fate of many innocent Men; nay, the greater Part of them that are of the most shining Piety; for their Goodness exposes them to the Envy

Envy of those malicious Tongues, whose Wickedness does reproach them, whilst the Vertues of the other shine forth with such Brightness. Our Blessed Saviour himself, that inimitable Example of a spotless Integrity, had all the Blackness of Guilt thrown upon him, which the Malice of Devils and devilish Men could invent. After all his Sobriety and Temperance, after all his Mortifications, his long and unparallel'd Fasting; he was reproached as *a Glutton and Wine-bibber, a Friend of Publicans and Sinners.* Tho' *he spake such Things as never Man spake*, tho' he so frequently confuted the Jewish Doctors, vindicated *Moses* from the wicked Glosses they had dressed him up in, tho' he over and over made it appear to them that he did *not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfil it*; yet he was reproached as a Preacher of strange Doctrines, as a seditious Person that set up for a Temporal Kingdom in opposition to *Cæsar*, that he had no Commission and Authority for his Preaching, that he had a Devil, and came to destroy *Moses* and the Prophets: Altho' he produced Miracles in Confirmation of his Doctrines, to the Astonishment of the Beholders, more and greater than all the Prophets down from *Moses* to *Malachi*, yet they attributed all the Efficacy of his

Almighty

Almighty Spirit to the Power of Satan, and would have him to cast out *Devils* by Beelzebub *the Prince of the Devils*. When therefore we have so great an Example before us, of reproached Innocence, we ought to account it Matter of great Joy, to be thought fit to tread in the Steps of our blessed Master. We fall infinitely short in Dignity to our glorious Redeemer, and therefore any Disgrace which we can suffer must be inconsiderable to that which he underwent; who yet, notwithstanding this, *despised the Shame*. Whatever Infamy we undergo, yet if we have a good Conscience to bear up our Spirits, we may defy all the Censure of an ill-natur'd World; when we have this Sun-shine within our own Breasts, we need not value all the gloomy Clouds which hang hovering without us. 'Tis to the Judgment of *God* that we are to stand or fall, and not to that of peevish Men; and if we can keep a Conscience void of Offence in his Sight who knows our Innocency, we need not much matter how we appear in the vitiated Eyes of others. 'Tis but the ill Opinion which some good Men have of us, that needs to disturb us, and they will shortly be undeceived, either by our vindicated Integrity in this World, or in the great Judgment of the other, when all

hidden

Things shall be revealed; but as for ill Men, we could never expect to have their good Word, unless we would agree to be as wicked as they, which is too dear a Price to buy it at.

It is but a little time, in Comparison of the Duration of our Being, before our Innocence will be completely cleared, and why should we be more hasty than God is, who defers the vindicating of his Providence to that great time of *Retribution*, altho' he sees his Being disputed, his Providence denied, his holy Name and Word every day blasphemed by insolent and daring Sinners?

Loss of Preferments.

4. *He ought to bear patiently the Loss of any Honour or Preferment he expected.* If we would contemn the World as we ought to do, we ought not so to set our Hearts upon any thing we have a Mind to here, but that we can be able to bear the Disappointment of it with a great deal of Temper and Indifferency. For we ought to consider, that this is a World of Contingencies, which no one can expect a constant Run of Fortune in: That there are so many unexpected Hits which turn the Scales in every Design we embark in; that there are so many cross Rubs which lie in the Way, so as we can never be positively certain of Success,

Success, till we have attained it. Then why should we set our Hearts upon that which we are not sure would ever be ours? And why should we be impatient in being disappointed of such a Thing, of which we might foresee so many thousand Ways of missing? We must think, that other Men had their Minds as big with Hopes and Expectations as we; that many of us were driving on the same Design, and probably with equal Degrees of Encouragement; that but one of the Competitors could bear away the Prize, and all the rest must be unsuccessful; and therefore should consider, that if Fortune was never so regular, we had no Reason to expect that for which we had so much Odds against us. It should content us, that we have managed the whole Design with a prudent and wise Contrivance; that we have set every Wheel a moving, that we thought would work on for our Purpose; that we have removed every Obstacle out of the Way, that seemed to lie cross to us; but if any unforeseen Accident has sprung up upon us, which it was not in the Reach of human Wisdom to provide against, and which no prudent Man would have thought of; we must be content in our Miscarriage, when our Projects are over-ruled by the Providence of Heaven, or by some unforeseen

final Contingencies which we were in no ways Masters of? Perhaps our ill Success was owing to the Weakness of our own Merits; and we are so partial to ourselves, as to mistake that as our ill Fortune, or an Injury to us, which was but the Result of a Wise and a Just Determination. We should consider further, that God sometimes disappoints us in our Designs, on purpose that we may be successful in another, which may be more advantageous to us; and that therefore our Misfortune is chiefly a Patent from Heaven for succeeding better. And lastly, we should also consider with ourselves, that God may thus disappoint our Hopes upon some Spiritual Design, upon Account that such a Preferment might be a Snare to our Innocency, a Temptation to Pride or Vain-Glory, Injustice or Luxury; he may do it to mortify some Vice within us, to abate and quell our Pride and Ambition, and to shew how we can brook a Disgrace and a Miscarriage; he may bring it about on purpose to wean us from the World, that we should not put any Confidence in Earthly Things, and to bring us to a more stedfast Dependence upon his Goodness, when we find by our Experience, that all Things else are so liable to fail us. Now to be impatient or discontented in these Cases, is

to

to fly in the Face of Heaven, while it is reaching out a Hand to us.

5. He ought not to be impatient, although his Children do not succeed so well in the World, as he might have expected.

If it shall please the Providence of God to be less bountiful to our Children in their Worldly Success; tho' they do not thrive proportionably to our Expectations, tho' their Improvement be not answerable to the Advantages they have had from us; tho' their Estates or Fortunes decrease and run back with us, either by accidental Losses, or a less prudent Management; we ought not to over-charge our Souls with an extravagant Grief for such Miscarriages. We ought rather to consider, that it is not in Man's Power to carve out his own Fortune as he pleases; but that it is the Over-ruling Providence of God, which deals his Favours out according to his All-wise Pleasure. That God has ordained several States and Conditions of Life in the World, and that every one must be supplyed with one or other; that all cannot be rich, and some must be poor; that there must be one to rule in the State, as well as one to be ruled by Them; and therefore among the innumerable Conditions of Life, it is a Mercy that God does not suffer our Children to fall into

into the lowest Dregs of Poverty. It is unreasonable to expect, that the Children of rich Parents should always be entitled to Riches too; for that were to entail Riches only to peculiar Families; it would be to confine God's Bounty and Providence just to such Measures, and to discourage the Industry of the Poor, by having no Possibility of an ample Reward. We should think, how that Riches are not the only Happiness our Children can possess; that it is a greater Blessing to see them *Good* than *Wealthy*; that it is a greater Comfort to us, to find that God has dispensed to them *the abundant Riches of his Grace*, than if he had given them all the Riches of the *Indies*. So likewise, when it shall please God to lay that sore Affliction upon us, of *undutiful* and *unmanned* Children, we ought not to render our Lives perfectly uncomfortable, by our great Impatience under it. It should be a Lessening of our Grief, when we think of the unspeakable Mercies of God to all Sinners; how often he finds out the lost and wandering Sheep, and brings home the Prodigal Son; that he frequently opens the Eyes and Hearts of the most blind and unrelenting Offenders; that he who could afford Mercy and Pardon to *Magdalen*, that had seven Devils, to *Paul* that persecuted

[illegible]

[illegible] walked

Lowellew

Sins; the Ambition and Pride of their Spirit, seldom publickly, for the Edification of the People, before they were absolved and admitted to Communion; but the Papists absolve the Delinquent first, and order their Confessions, which are generally to be in private, afterwards: The Ancients never proceeded to any Act in their Publick Assemblies, but they only publickly admitted or re-admitted Penitents; but the Papists shield it with secrecy. So that these two sorts of Confessions are as different from one another, as Black from White; they only agree in one Common Name, and nothing else. The Schoolmen, in the dark Ages, have founded upon this Modern Notion, by a Mistake of the Latin Word Confessio, and fallen themselves in the Church-Discipline, and to the Contempt of the Primitive Piety, and many thousand Souls have perished by a Thing of no Antiquity, but they have dipped their Hands in Blood for, and have spoiled [illegible] of Light Duty, as much as the Publick, more to the Advantage of the Confessor, and the Impossibility of proving Sins against, and charging them upon [illegible] Absolved Criminals, [illegible] and [illegible] them, therefore we may be entirely [illegible]

Satisfy

Indeed, as the great Distance of the Highest, is but cause to pass it a little over
so Slightly that an Advice in this Particular is already needful, since the Discipline of the Church is so strangely decayed. For, now we have Reason to complain, little not only the Keepers, but the Government of the Church is become Lay. For whom Excommunications, and all other Ecclesiastick Censures tend, for the most part, to no other Purpose, but to feed the Avarice of Chancellors and Proctors. But in those good and ancient Times, when the Censures of the Church were directed by Rules of Conscience, and not of Law; they looked upon an Excommunication to be worth them Death it self, when they were cast out from the Prayers and Communion of the Faithful, and debarred of all the Comforts and Benefits which Christ has provided in his Church. They thought all Punishments easie, and patiently endured their long Penance for the Confession of Repentance, which sometimes is laid about twenty Years; they fell prostrate before the Feet of the Poor, and earnestly desired their Prayers and Pardon; some clothed like Weepers at their Gates in the Habit of the whole Congregation; they went in squalid Habit, and with a dejected

jected Countenance; their Bed was only Sackcloth and Ashes, and they spent their whole Time in Prayer and Fasting. And such ought our Practice to be, in Imitation of those Pious Times, whenever God shall suffer us to fall into such Crimes, which the Church shall punish by her Censures. For it is not a bare Commutation of Penance for Money, which will satisfy God Almighty, though it may the Church-Officers; but a serious Sorrow for our Offences, and a Repentance as Publick as our Sin was Notorious.

3. *For a due Performance of Mortification, he must be diligent in the Duty of Fasting.*

By Fasting I do not understand only an Abstinence from such particular Food, which any Church shall think fit to prohibit; for such Kind of Fasting is frequently but a putting Tricks upon God Almighty; under the Pretence of mortifying the Body, it is oftentimes but a pampering of it; and tho' they may call it a *Fast*, it is really nothing else but a *Feasting* upon Fish. But by Fasting, I mean a total Abstinence from Food, for such a considerable Time, as our Bodies will conveniently bear, without Fear of Sickness; either for a whole Day, or the greatest Part of it; which was the Custom of Fasting among God's People in

Vehement in Fasting.

former Ages, *Judg.* xx. 26. *Esth.* iv. 16. Now, this Duty of Fasting has been always looked upon as a considerable Part of Religion; and upon this Account the *Pharisees*, who pretended to the greatest Degrees of Piety, were very remarkable for this Performance, as appears by the glorying of that self-conceited one, *Luk.* xviii. 12. *I fast twice in a Week.* And we are assured, that it remains still a Part of our Religion, because our Saviour gives us Rules for our Christian Fasting, that it should be private, and void of Ostentation, in Opposition to the Fasts of the *Pharisees*, who loved to be seen of Men, *Matth.* vi. 16. And for the same Duty we have the Examples of *Paul* and *Barnabas*, *Act.* xiii. 13. and particularly of S. *Paul* himself, who tells us, he was *in Fastings often*, 2 *Cor.* xi. 17. That he did *approve himself in Watchings and Fastings*, 2 *Cor.* vi. 5. And the same Apostle gives Direction to use a particular Kind of Abstinence, whilst the Duty of Fasting is to be undergone. *Defraud not one another, unless it be with Consent for a Time, that you may give yourselves to Fasting and Prayer*, 1 *Cor.* vii. 5. So that it is plain, that the Apostle would not have given such particular and strict Direction for Fasting, unless it had been a necessary Christian Duty. Add to this, the

constant

constant Practice of the Primitive Church, that great Devotion and Austerity, which they used in the Publick Fasts of the Church, that Strictness with which they observed every Vigil, those real and unaffected Mortifications they underwent in the Weeks of *Lent* and the *Embers*, those many Days in each Week they spent in Fasting and Prayer, those strict Severities they exercised themselves withall, till they had brought their Body in a manner to concenter with their Soul, and readily to obey all its Dictates and Inclinations, till they had almost refined their Earthly Bodies into Spiritual ones, and, even before the Resurrection, made them in a manner Spiritual.

But some will say, to what Purpose is all this *troublesome* Injunction? for, it seems to be no Part of Religion, and a Man may be very vertuous and honest without Fasting; and if he can practise Religion without it, this is then but a Work of Supererogation. But may such be pleased to consider, that all Fasts, both Publick and Private, do mightily conduce to Religion and Piety; and altho' we should have no regard to the Authority of God and the Church who command them, yet it would be advisable to keep them, purely upon Account of their great Furtherance of

Piety, and their Help to true Repentance. For first, as for Publick Fasts:

It is but requisite, at such Times, when we ought to bewail the Crying Sins of the Nation, and to deprecate the Publick Calamities which are hanging over our Heads, that we should publickly meet together to offer up our Joint-Prayers to Almighty God for the Pardon of those National Sins, and for the Removal of the Punishment which is due to them. For generally there are some reigning Sins in a Country, which are properly National and Epidemical, that bring such heavy Judgments upon it; and therefore they being committed in so Publick a manner, they ought to be repented of in as Publick an one; and therefore are openly to be bewailed, and to be asked Pardon for, by a whole City or Nation, in their respective Publick Assemblies. For in this Case their Repentance ought to be as conspicuous and notorious, as their former Transgression.

And besides, in the usual Weekly or Anniversary Fasts, when the whole Church do solemnly meet together in their respective Congregations, their united Fasting and Praying, when heartily performed, will in a manner force down God's Blessing upon us; they will, to speak as our Saviour does,

does, storm Heaven, and take it by Violence; for if the Prayers of a righteous Man prevail much, the Joint-Prayers of all God's People so earnestly deprecating the Divine Vengeance, and imploring Mercy and Pardon, these will be in a manner irresistible. Therefore, upon Days of Publick Humiliation, whether enjoined by the National Church or Government, we ought all of us to come to our respective Churches, and there join our hearty Prayers with the Congregation, to beg God's Pardon for those so many crying Sins of the Nation, which have offended his Goodness; to beseech him with the greatest Earnestness, that he would be pleased to receive this our Sorrow and Contrition, thro' the Merits and Blood of his Son, as an Atonement for our former Wickedness; that he would not deliver us over to eternal Destruction which we have deserved; nor yet in this World, that he would not suffer the last Viols of his Wrath to be poured out upon us; that he would be pleased to give us a further Time to repent, before the Utmost of his Judgments be executed upon us; and that he would be pleased to save the Nation for a few righteous ones Sakes. Now this if we would perform in our Publick Fasts, soberly and seriously, with a devout and

pious Mind, with due Affection, and a hearty Desire of Amendment; I doubt not, but God would hear our Prayers, and would give our Desires suitable Success.

So secondly, there is as much Reason for our Observance of *Private Fasting*.

Private Fasting.

1. We have great Reason for *Private Fasting, because by it we subdue our Carnal Appetites and Affections.* God knows, when we keep the strictest Guard over these, they are oftentimes apt to extort the Reins from us, even when we hold the steadiest Hand upon them. But when we live a Life at random, without any Conduct of our Appetites and Passions, when we give our Natural Propensions their full Sway, and indulge them in every Thing they crave and desire, when we feed and pamper up our Flesh with all that is pleasant and grateful to it, when we habituate our Bodies to all the Arts of Ease and Luxury, it is no wonder then if Sin get Dominion over us, when we willingly deliver ourselves over to its Empire, and will not make the least Struggle to break its Chains. But when we, with the Apostle, keep under our Bodies, and bring them into Subjection, when we check and curb their craving Appetites, when we moderate their Natural Fire by denying Fewel

to

to the Flame; we then make our most head-strong Desires easily manageable, and bring our most ungovernable Passions perfectly to the Conduct and Command of our Reason. And therefore it is admirably well contrived in our Holy Religion, that we are prescribed the Means of Fasting, the better to comply with its Precepts. For spare Diet, and intermitted Meals, will soon bring the greatest Voluptuary to the Practice of Chastity and Temperance; the very Thoughts of his beloved Sins will be then ready to forsake him; under such a calm and regular Habit of Body, he will be almost rid of all Kind of Temptations to his former Vices, or else be able to subdue them without the least Struggle or Contest from them. Again, we find oftentimes within the best of us, a sort of Aversion toward Heavenly Things, and a too great Hankering after the Things of this World; but if we take no Care to put a Check to such Inclinations, we shall every Day find them to grow upon us; if we give no Denial to our craving Appetites, but suffer them to take their full Swing of Enjoyments; we shall soon experience, that we shall be grown so all-of-a-piece with the World, that there will be no separating it from us; we shall see that our Heart and Affections will

be so interwoven with the Pleasures, and Interests, and Satisfactions we find here, that all Piety and Devotion, and every thing else which savours of another World will be perfect Gall and Bitterness to us, will go down like nauseous Potions against our Stomach, and all the Art in the World, whilst we still continue to gratify our Appetites, will never make them palatable to us. But when once we begin to refuse them, even those Pleasures they may innocently enjoy, when we do not only forbid them the Luxuriances of Meat and Drink, but frequently interdict them the Use of an ordinary Meal, after a time, when our Bodies have been inured to such Hardships, they will be perfectly weaned from the World, and then they will be at our Command, as we please to train them up to any Actions of Vertue and Religion.

2. Another Reason for private Fasting is, *Because it does improve our Devotions.* The Operations of the Mind have a wonderful Dependence upon the Habit and Temper of the Body, and like a Piece of Clock-work are screwed up and down, according as the Blood and Spirits receive Alteration. And this not only in ordinary Conversation, and Matters of this Life, but even in Things relating to God and

Religion.

Religion. Our Devotion at one time, according as the State of our Body stands, is brisk and fervent, and at another time 'tis heavy and lumpish. And this depends more upon our way of Diet, our Eating and Drinking, than on any thing besides. When we cram and surfeit ourselves with full and frequent Meals, our Thoughts are then all over-clouded with Fumes and Vapours from our Stomach, and we shall be so far from thinking as we should of God and Religion, that we shall be hardly able to think at all: But a thin and a spare Diet, with frequent Fastings, will dispell all those Fogs and Mists which arise from an over-charged Stomach, will restore the Mind to the absolute Command of its Faculties, which before lay useless by, or else were to be dragged on with such Difficulty and Unwillingness, that we wanted Power or Patience to overcome. This is that noble Exercise, that makes our Minds quiet and sedate, clear and perceptive, and apt for Contemplation, and all Spiritual Employments; it improves our Zeal, and animates our Petitions, sets our Souls upon the Flight, and makes our Devotions all Life, Wing and Spirit. Ask but the devout Christian, what Difference he finds between his ordinary Devotion, and those

upon his Days of Fasting and Humiliation? and he will tell you, as much as between Life and Death, between a Body and a Carcass; there is so much Warmth and Vigour and Alacrity in the one, more than in the other.

3. Another Reason for private Fasting is, *Because it testifies the Fear of God's Punishments, and a hearty Sorrow for our Sins.*

Eating and Drinking have always been accounted a Token of Mirth and Jollity, and therefore it has been the Custom of Men in all Ages, to make Feasts and Entertainments upon any very joyful Occasion. So likewise, on the other side, Fasting and Abstinence from our usual Food has been looked upon as a Mark of Grief and Despondency. And indeed this is naturally to be accounted for. For when the Soul is overwhelmed with Grief, and is wholly taken up with a Sense of the Misery of its Condition, it is little at leisure to look after any of its ordinary Actions: Nature then seems to neglect itself, and carelessly to omit that Sustenance which is necessary even for its vital Subsistence. And thus we have known many irrational Creatures to have pined away upon the Loss of their Young, or their Masters; and both Men and Women have been known to have starved themselves

themselves upon the Death of their dearest Relations. Indeed these are Instances of Souls over-charged with Grief; but no Grief can be so small and inconsiderable, but it must have that Effect upon our Bodies, as to make them more to neglect, and to take less Pleasure in Food than at other times. And then, can we suppose, that at a time when we pretend to lie weighed down with the greatest Heaviness of Soul, with all the Pressures of God's Wrath upon us, under the Smart, it may be, of God's Judgments at present, and in prospect of greater hereafter; under the sad Consideration of lying under the Divine Displeasure, that we have offended so gracious a God, after so many Instances of Kindness to us, that we are accounted Enemies by the great Maker of Heaven and Earth, and have lost all our Pretence (till we have renewed it by Repentance) to the Rewards which he lays up for his faithful Servants? I say, at such a time, when we have all this Grief upon our Minds, we cannot be supposed to be any ways naturally inclin'd to solace ourselves with usual Entertainments, or that God will take our Grief for unfeigned, which has not the same Effect upon us, as the least Damp of Spirit is used to have. No certainly, such a Sense of our Misery,

which upon such an Occasion we ought to have, will make our Souls so to turn within ourselves, and so to think of Expedients to remove that inward Pressure, by earnest Prayers, Sighs, and Meditations, as will give us no leisure to be looking after the Refreshments of our ordinary Meals. I say, Men that have such a true Sorrow for their Sins, will at such a time have but little Thought or Appetite for their Food; but though they should, yet it is but reasonable to make even their Bodies thus to accompany their Souls in Mourning, and to make these pine as much after their Sustenance, as the other do languish under the Displeasure of God.

4. *Mortification requires of our Contempt of the World, that he should be liberal in Alms-giving.*

Mortification is a sort of a Spiritual Revenge which we take upon ourselves, for having offended God's Laws, a voluntary Smart which we undergo, to make us take better care of our Behaviour for the future. And as Fasting is a Revenge taken upon ourselves in our Bodies, so Alms-giving is a Revenge taken upon us in our Estates. And indeed, whilst we retain a Love to Riches, this is the greatest Revenge we can take upon ourselves; for the Covetous in the Prosecution of their

Vice

Vice are inured to Fasting, they can starve their Backs and Bellies to increase their Estates; but to part with their Money is that which goes most against their grain, and therefore 'tis the severest Mortification they can undergo. And this is evident from the History of the rich young Man in the xixth of S. *Matthew*, when our Saviour seem'd to exact no more of him, but the keeping the Ten Commandments in the easiest Sense, which was no more than observing the *Jewish* Law, and doing no body any Mischief; he answered very pertly, *All these Things have I done from my Youth up*: But when our Saviour bade him go *sell all that he had, and give to the Poor, he went away sorrowful, for he had great Possessions.* But when we design Alms-giving for a Part of Mortification, 'tis not a slight throwing to the Poor, Farthings or Pence, or giving a little Victuals or Drink at our Doors, which neither does us any Harm, or them much Good: But it is to be substantially liberal, it is to give away such a considerable Part of our Estates in Charity, that we ourselves may be able to feel it. To bestow a little Charity only now and then, upon those that ask it, is so far from Mortification, that it only serves to give us Ease and Satisfaction; for it is to deliver us from the Importunity of the Asker,

Asker, or to rid us from the Commiseration or Yearning of Bowels at the wretched Object, which makes his Company uneasy to us. This is so far from taking Revenge upon, that it is to be kind to ourselves; and therefore to give Alms in order to Mortification, is to bestow so munificently, that it shall grate upon our Flesh and Blood to part with it. Such was that great Charity of the Widow, *Mark* xii. that threw in all her Living into the Treasury; of those that sold their Possessions, and laid them at the Apostles Feet, *Act.* iv. 34. Such was the Charity of those admirable Persons, that founded those great Societies of Learning in the Universities, which have bred up so many thousands of learned Men of all Professions and Qualities, that have so benefited the Nation by their Parts and Industry for many Ages; Charities so great and glorious, that tho' they were exhibited in dark and superstitious Times, yet they far out-shine all we can boast of, upon whom the Gospel shines brighter; Charities which shame our Protestant Coldness, and Depredation of holy Things, who are content to enjoy the Benefits of an Orthodox, though a Sacrilegious, Reformation.

But though I make Alms-giving a Part of Mortification, it is only so at first, and

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to those that are unaccustomed to it; for when once Men are arrived to a Habit of Charity, and can properly be denominated charitable Men, there arises such a Pleasure from the very Duty itself, there is so much Joy and Satisfaction, such a pleasing and such an innocent Pride, which proceeds from having relieved a distressed Object, in having in some measure supplied the Part of God Almighty here upon Earth, and having assisted those who were not in a Capacity to help themselves; this gives a Man, upon Reflexion, so much solid Pleasure, that the spending an Estate another way, is all Froth and Vanity; so that it remains a very difficult Point to determine which receives the greatest Satisfaction, the Poor Man in receiving the Bounty, or the Charitable Man in bestowing it.

5. *Another Part of Mortification consists in exercising bodily Hardships upon ourselves.* I believe, the generality of Protestants look upon this Part of Mortification, to be only a Piece of Popish Superstition, fit only for Nuns and Friars, and other silly People, that have a mind to supererogate in that Communion. But this is so far from being a Popish Practice, that not only Scripture, and the Usage of the Primitive Church, countenance it, but even the Histories

Histories of many vertuous Pagans, who have inured their Bodies to the greatest Hardships, thereby the better to govern their Passions and Appetites, and to arrive to the more exalted State of Vertue. 'Tis almost incredible, to relate the voluntary Mortifications of that one Philosopher *Diogenes*, to mention no more of the *Cynick* Sect; how he had no other Cloaths but his Cloak, no Place for his Victuals but his Budget, no House but his Tub, no Horse but his Staff, nothing to drink out of but a wooden Dish, which he threw away when he learnt of a Beggar-Boy to drink out of the hollow of his Hand. Add to this the voluntary Poverty, and the hard Fare of *Crates* and *Cleombes*, the severe Lives of *Coriolanus*, *Æmilius Paulus*, both the *Cato's*; the Austerities of the *Persian Magi*, who lived only upon Bread and Colworts, and yet the more rigid Severities of the *Brachmans*, that lay upon the Ground, and sometimes upon the Stones, that *Winter* and *Summer* wore no Cloaths, that stood upon the burning Sands whole Days together with naked Feet; some of which lived all their Lives tied to a Tree, and others walked about, always dragging after them a massy Chain; whilst others lived in Dens and Caverns. Add to these one eminent Example more, and

and that is the Emperor *Marcus Antoninus*, who at twelve Years old took up the Philosophick *Pallium*, and studied always in it, who eat but a little, and that very coarse Food, lay upon the Ground, and when his Mother *Faustina* would have spread a Beast's Skin for him to lie upon, refused it. Now if these great Men, which were endowed with so large a Compass of Knowledge and Learning, thought it but reasonable, and as a Part of their Duty, to discipline their Bodies with such rigid Severities, thereby to make them more manageable and tractable to the Soul, and to render them more pliable to the Rules of Vertue; certainly we Christians have a greater Obligation to inure them to the same Austerities, because our Vertues have a greater Reward annexed to them. Which we have a farther Motive to, if we consider those extraordinary Mortifications which the Primitive Christians underwent, whence they got the Name of * Ἀσκηταὶ, *Asceticks*, or Exercisers, and ‖ Ἀθληταὶ, *Athleticks*, or Wrestlers; Names not peculiar only to the † Monks, but to the whole Body of Christians, for their strict and austere Piety. Read but the

* *Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 4.*
‖ *Pallad. Hist. Laus. Edit. Meursii*, p. 2.
† *Cassub. Exerc. Bar. Exerc. II. par.* 12.

Writings

Writings of the Apologists, and the Lives of the Primitive Saints and Martyrs, and see upon what coarse and spare Diet they lived, how they fasted till their Mortification was read in their Joints and Faces, so that *pallidi & trepidi*, Pale and Trembling, were the opprobrious Names given to the Christians; what vile Apparel they wore, and how they abridged themselves not only of the Conveniencies, but even the Necessaries almost of Life. For the Truth of this we need not appeal to the Practice of the *Anthonies*, *Hilarions*, and the *Macarij*, and other more fanciful Mortificators; but to that of the great *Origen*, and S *Austin* themselves, Men of as great Judgment, as they were of strict Piety. But above all, we may take the Example of the Blessed *JESUS*, whose whole Life, from his Cradle to his Cross, was one continued Act of Mortification; who being the Son of God, and highest in the Glory of his Father, humbled himself to become one of the meanest of the Sons of Men; who might, if he pleased, have taken up, for his Residence upon Earth, the Court of *Augustus*, yet he chose rather to be born in a Stable, and laid in a Manger, to be educated in the House of one of the ordinariest Mechanicks, who sorted out for his Acquaintance and Assistance Men of the meanest

meanest Rank, and of as mean Capacity; who disciplined his Body with unparallel'd and unheard-of Fastings, even beyond the Power of Grace as well as Nature; who espoused so vile a Poverty, as, for the Payment of a small Tax, to be forced to employ his Omnipotency; who when he had given comfortable Conveniencies to the Fowls of the Air, and the Beasts of the Field, he himself had *no where to lay his Head*; who at last submitted to an ignominious and a painful Death, to the Mockeries and the Malice of his implacable Enemies, when he might have commanded down Battalions of Angels to have revenged his Injuries. To call this *Popish* and *Monkish*, is to make Christ himself such; for it is the Height and Top Point of Christianity, the Excellence and Glory of our Religion, the great Pattern which our Lord and Master has set us. *Beate Jesu, Te Duce sequimur.* He has gone before us in this Tract of Severities, and we are sluggish and ungenerous Scholars, if we refuse to follow.

But because the Fault of Superstition is generally imputed to these Severities, I shall lay down some Rules, to shew how we may lawfully and profitably use them.

1. We may very lawfully and profitably use them, *after the Commission of very great and notorious Sins.* As,

As, for instance, when a Man [illegible] guilty of Drunkenness, it may [illegible] prudent Part of Mortification [illegible] from all manner of strong Drink [illegible] determinate Time, to fast so many [illegible] afterwards, to refrain from his [illegible] ed Diversions, to wear a mean or [illegible] easy Habit, or the like. Now, tho' this does in no ways make Satisfaction [illegible] for our Sin, yet it is of great Advantage to denote our Sorrow for our Sin, and for the Improvement of our Repentance: For it is a great Sign that we are sorry for our Crime, when we punish ourselves for it; when we are hard to our own Flesh and Blood, and take Vengeance upon our own dear Selves, for the Violation of God's Law. For tho' small Sins may be pardoned by God Almighty upon an easy and a general Repentance, yet it is requisite on Account of those of a higher Nature, to render our Repentance more solemn and severe, and to make the Sharpness of the one to equal the Greatness of the other.

2. *In order to the taming of our Lusts.* For when once we are accustomed to [illegible] Severities, our Affections will be [illegible] from sensual Pleasures, and be free [illegible] any Inclination towards them: It [illegible] like bending a Stick the contrary

[illegible] they have been long used to such [illegible] they will have little Tendency to [illegible] and Luxury. Besides, this will [illegible] to take great Care for the future, [illegible] Gods Laws, when we [illegible] Trials we must undergo [illegible]

[illegible] Care that these Severities [illegible] and barbarous. They must not [illegible] Contrivance of Satan the Spirit, which Church-History makes mention of, who spent his Life within a hollow Pillar; or like those wilful Mortifications we meet with in the Lives of the Popish Saints; for such odd Actions are to the great Disparagement of Religion, and lay it open to the Calumny and Mockery of wicked Men. True Religion is the Result of true and solid Reasoning; therefore Humour and Caprice are certainly no Part of it.

4. *These Severities ought not to be cruel.* For God Almighty is not an implacable Heathen Deity, to be appeased only with humane and bloody Sacrifices; and we find that Cutting and Gashing of the Heathen Priests Bodies, 1 Kings [illegible] was farther from being imitated, that it was declined by the Prophets. Christianity is an Institution which is contrived for the Ease and Benefit of Mankind; and therefore

fore such an Exercising of it can never be allowable, which consists only in such Plague and Torment.

5. *They ought not to be contrary to the Rules of Society.* God Almighty designed Men to be sociable, and not to be *Monks* and *Anchorites*; he designed them to do what Good they could to one another, and not mew themselves up, and live only to their own Satisfaction in Cells and Cloisters. They may, if they please, call this a Mortification; but it is far from a true Christian one; because it is so far from mortifying their Affections, that it is only the gratifying a fallen Humour of their own. For, I doubt not, but there is oftentimes as much Sensuality in gratifying this dogged Temper, as in prosecuting many Lusts of the Flesh. For, if a Man be inclined to a melancholy and splenetick Humour, a *Monastery* is no more Mortification to him, than Wine and Women are to the *Sensual*.

PART II.

Of Self-Denial.

BY Self-Denial is to be understood nothing else, but a *Refusing to enjoy those Things, which by a Natural Propension we are inclined to desire.* So that Self-Denial

was observed before) is a Mortification to the Mind, as Mortification, properly so called, is one to the Body. That makes the Body suffer what it is averse from, and this hinders the Mind from enjoying what it does desire. The Soul has two principal Faculties, the Understanding, and the Will, both these become the Subject of Self-Denial. Hence there arises two Parts of Self-Denial, which he that pretends to contemn the World, must be perfect in.

I. *In respect of our Reason.*
II. *In respect of our Desires and Passions.*

I. Now to deny ourselves in respect of our Reason, is, 1. *To submit our Reason to God Almighty in all Things which he reveals to us, or requires of us.* Men usually pride themselves in nothing more, than in pretending to understand, and to give Reasons for every Thing they are concerned with, and nothing goes more against their Grain, than to be forced to acknowledge their Ignorance, altho' it be in Things of the highest Nature. Nay, our Minds are so aspiring, that even the Nature of God himself, his Providence, his Revelation, his Laws, must all come under the Examination of our Reason. Therefore, when Men make their Reason submit to high and exalted Truths, they never do an Act

of

of Self-Denial which more grates upon their Nature than this. And this more especially is so to Men of a Speculative Temper, who love to be giving Reasons for all Things; for they can sooner mortify an hundred Lusts, and deny themselves any Satisfaction which Flesh and Blood desires, than let their Arguments submit, although it be to God's Word. But let this be as irksome as it will to Men of this inquisitive and opinionative Humour; yet it is what we ought to do, and what we have great Reason for. The Apostle tells us, that it is the Power of the Gospel to *cast down Imaginations, and every high Thing that exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God; and to bring into Captivity every Thought, to the Obedience of Christ*, 2 *Cor.* x. 5. Which is a very hard Lesson to our *Virtuoso Divines*, who are for turning all Religion into Hypothesis, and who believe the Scripture no farther, than it will agree with their Philosophy. It runs very cross to the Genius of such Philosophical Gentlemen, to suffer an Experiment to give place to an Article of Faith; or to receive any Thing for Truth, which does not agree with their received Laws of Matter and Motion, or their fanciful Opinions of the Universe. And the like is to be said of our *Socinian Adepti*, who will

will believe nothing in the Nature of the Deity, which their Reason cannot comprehend, and lay aside the Doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, because they cannot understand it: As if there were not ten thousand Mysteries in the Deity which we cannot understand, and would seem as contradictious to Reason, as this does, if they were revealed to us. All this is an aspiring Haughtiness of Soul, and a foolish Ambition of being thought to understand every Thing; which we ought to restrain as much as ever we can, and to deny ourselves the Satisfaction we might receive in gratifying it. And there is all the Reason in the World we should do it, if we consider either the Narrowness of our Understandings, or the Nature of God himself. Shall we pretend to question Divine Truths, because they surpass our Understandings, when our poor Understandings are confounded by every Thing almost we see before our Eyes? Let them first unriddle all the Mysteries of that Thing we behold every where about us, which we call *Matter*; how easy it is to be *seen* and *felt*, and how impossible to be *understood*; how by Demonstration it is infinitely divisible, and yet we are sure at the same time it is in itself finite; let them explain the Difficulties which arise about *Motion*,

what an inexplicable Thing that is which we call *Moving*, how a Thing should be in this Moment in this Place, and since the last have been in ten thousand, or how a finite Power should make a Thing once at Rest ever to move again. What an unaccountable Thing is that Impression of Motion in Bodies projected; how Motion, which is but a Mode or Accident, should go out of one Body into another; how all other Accidents, as Colour, Taste, &c. which are nothing but Figure and Position, should produce *Ideas* so unlike themselves in the Soul? Let them give but any tolerable Account of these, and a thousand other mysterious Effects in Nature, and then we will give them Leave to reject Truths in the Deity, or others which God has revealed, upon Account of their Incomprehensibility. But especially to deny Truths, when we consider they are in the Godhead, which is all Astonishment and Mystery, every Attribute of which, Eternity, Omnipotence, Omniscience, is a fathomless Ocean of inexplicable Wonders; this is a wretched Mixture of Boldness and Folly, this is the Height of *Atheistical* Impudence; it is to make the great Creator of all Things such a little Being, as to be understood by us, and to make Gods of ourselves, by pretending to understand all Things.

2. To

2. *To suspend our Judgment in difficult and controverted Matters, or at least not to pronounce peremptorily about them, till such Time as we are sure we are in the right.*

Most Men have such an over-weaning Opinion of the Side of any Question or Doctrine they have espoused, that they are ready to declare dogmatically for their Opinion, before they have half examined what can be said against it. And this Fault does then more especially prevail, when the Doctrine is new, and of the Persons own advancing. For then the Vanity of delivering something New and Entertaining, of having left the dull Road of Common Thinkers, and having been the Inventor of some new Fangle, perfectly deafens their Ears to all that can be said in Opposition, and blinds them from seeing the Absurdities and ill Consequences of their Opinion. I confess, to maintain a decent Modesty in this Matter, considering how partial Men are to their own Side, and what a Fondness they have to their own Brats, is an extraordinary Piece of Self-Denial; especially in Men of a proud ambitious Temper, for such will as soon renounce Religion, as their Opinion, tho' the Falsness of the one be as manifest, as the Truth is of the other. But be this as grating as it may, it is no more than

what our Reason as well as Religion obliges us to. The wise King, *Prov.* xxxvii. bids us not *to be wise in our own Eyes:* And the Apostle exhorts us, that in *Lowliness of Mind we esteem others better than ourselves, Phil.* ii. 3. And if we add to this the Consideration, that we are all very liable to Mistake, and that we often take that for Demonstration which is downright Fallacy; that there may be many Objections against our Opinion, which we have never thought of, and that there is no Subject so narrow, that one single Eye can exactly survey; that we ourselves may change our Opinion in this Matter, as we have done many times before; that many Wise and Learned Men have been of a contrary Opinion, and that 'tis but Modesty to suppose they have considered the Point as well as we; that after all we may be too much byas'd by our Passions, and our Fondness to a Cause may spoil our Argumentation: I say, if we consider all this, we shall have very great Reason to give a Check to our Positiveness in disputed Points, and our Partiality to our own Inventions. And if it be true, (as there is no Reason to doubt of it) that the Duties of Mortification and Self-Denial are commanded us, in order to a Future

See Dr. Sherlock of Death, Cap. I. Sect. III.

ture State, then I am ſure theſe Duties of ſubmitting our Reaſon to Divine Truths, of a modeſt Heſitancy in doubtful Matters, are peculiar Qualifications to go thither; for as ſoon as we come there, we ſhall be let into a World of myſterious Revelations, and our Souls will be ſwallowed up in the Contemplation of the Deity; and then for the incredulous or poſitive Man to come there, it would ſpoil that State of Tranquillity with Diſpute and Wrangle, and Men would not believe thoſe Glories of the Deity, the Revelation of which is to make them happy. For perhaps one Reaſon why the Vertue of Faith is ſo particularly recommended in Scripture, and why ſuch Things are propoſed as the Object of it, which ſeem to run ſo counter to our Reaſon, is this; that God deſigns to reveal ſo much of himſelf to us in another World, that we ſhould never be able to bear the mighty Illumination, unleſs we were prediſpoſed for it, by letting into our Souls, before-hand, ſome previous Light; which although but ſmall in reſpect of the other innumerable Myſteries, is nevertheleſs, we ſee, of Force enough at preſent, to overſet and confound our Underſtandings.

2. To deny ourſelves in reſpect of our Deſires and Paſſions, is *to be very ſparing in*

enjoying the Pleasures which we may lawfully allow ourselves.

Christianity does not allow us to take our full Draught even of Lawful Pleasures, but obliges us to break off our Enjoyments, long before our Reason declares them to be vicious. Simple Morality might allow us to walk upon the very Verge of Vice, if we could be sure to take Care never to make a false Step; but Christianity engages us to keep up into the Heart and Center of Vertue, to taste so sparingly of sensual Pleasures, that there may be not only no Danger, but no Possibility of Excess. This is, you will say, a very hard Lesson, for Men that are to live in this World, that are surrounded with Pleasures of this Nature; and that it should seem enough for the Inhabitants of this World, not to be excessive and brutish in them; but to take our Leaves of them before they grow vicious, seems a Lecture fit only for a Cloister or a Wilderness. Indeed, this Doctrine would be something hard, if we considered this World without any relation to the other; for it seems enough to all Intents and Purposes, for the Welfare of this World, that a Man be only temperate and not abstemious, that he be but just, and honest, and courteous; but there does not seem to be that great Need

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of the Universal Gospel-Charity; but when we consider that this World is only a State of Probation for a better, then it is clear that these Injunctions are laid upon us, to train us up to that; that these are to wean us from Sensual Pleasures, the better to fit us for a Spiritual Life, to make us more earnestly desire the Joys of another World, when we find so little Satisfaction in this. All which Duty is most admirably laid down by S. *Paul*. *But this I say, Brethren, the Time is short. It remaineth that both they that have Wives, be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this World, as not abusing it; for the Fashion of this World passeth away*, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31.

2. *Not to allow ourselves the Enjoyment of many Pleasures, which our Appetites desire, although they be not unlawful.*

We are of ourselves but too prone to hanker after the good Things of this Life, and to neglect the great Work of preparing for the other; we are by a kind of Natural Magnetism drawn down to the Earth; and therefore, if we cherish this Principle by gratifying the Flesh in all those Enjoyments it craves, and never

give a Check to its Desires, we shall find that the World will grow so dear to us, that we shall be willing to take up our Tabernacle in it, and say, *It is good for us to be here*; and we shall be so far from our Christian Task of growing in Grace, that we shall but *fall from one Wickedness to another*. For Pleasure has a bewitching Faculty, the more we taste it, the more we hanker after it; and therefore, the best way to avoid being captivated by that Syren, is to stop our Ears to her Charms. When we have often balk'd our Appetites by denying them what they crave, they will in a while grow so quiet, that they will crave no more. But to be always pampering and indulging them, will render them but the more outrageous; and will make us neglect our Spiritual Concerns, whilst we are progging for the *Flesh*. For such an one will have but little regard to Heaven, that has laid out his Paradise upon Earth; the Thoughts of those pure Ethereal Joys will relish but very insipidly with him, that is eager upon the Satisfaction of those sordid and brutish Pleasures. But besides, we know not, how far an uncontrouled Pursuit of these fleshly Enjoyments will carry us; they may for some time run along very glibly in the High Road of Vertue, but it is at great

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Odds that at last it carries us out of the way. If I allow myself the constant Diversion of Drinking and Company, it is much if at last I be not betrayed into Intemperance. A too free Conversation with Women, too much of Singing, Dancing, and the like, may be a great Snare to Incontinency. So that to indulge ourselves in all Pleasures, which are only not unlawful, is to choose to walk upon the Brink of a River, where, if our Foot chance once to slip, we are gone.

3. *Not to gratify our Passions of Anger, Revenge,* &c. And in this, Christianity displays her Glory above all the Religions and Philosophy in the World. To forgive Injuries, and to love our Enemies, was the proper Doctrine of the Blessed *Jesus.* At this, the great *Aristotle* himself stumbled; this was so sublime a Truth, that *Cicero*, the Reformer of the Ancient Philosophy was ignorant of. But our Saviour commands us to *love our Enemies, to bless them that curse us, to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us,* Mat. v. 4. He tells us, that *whosoever is angry with his Brother, shall be in Danger of Judgment*; and that he who shall proceed to Railing, and ill Language, *shall be in Danger of Hell-fire,* v. 2.

Arist. Eth. ad Nicom. l. 4. c. 11. Cic. Invent. l. 2.

This is a very difficult Lesson to Flesh and Blood, which seems to have these Passions planted in them: But then, as difficult as it may be, it must be learnt, or we can pretend no Title to Christianity, or the Joys of another World. If our Nature prove stubborn and refractory, we must force it the other way; we must have a constant Guard upon ourselves; we must stifle our rising Passions in the Bud; we must use ourselves to a calm way of Talking and Conversing; we must not suffer any thing to heat us into Passion; we must oftentimes curb our Anger, even when we have just Occasion for it; we must avoid all Kind of Discourse and Company, which may provoke us to these Passions, make an ample Acknowledgment and Satisfaction to those whom we have behaved ourselves undecently to under them, inflict some voluntary Punishment upon ourselves, when we shall be overtaken in them, and so at last, by God's Grace, we may attain to a compleat Mastery over them. Whatever Philosophers may talk about the Usefulness of these ruffling Passions, there is that Goodness and Sweetness in a Calm and an even Temper, something so endearing to Society, and laid out purposely for the Good of Mankind, that it is worth

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our while (granting there is no Immorality in a hot, paſſionate Way of Converſation) to be at the Expence of conquering our Nature, purely to gain the Hearts and Affections of our Neighbours, who are all ſo ſtrangely taken with ſuch an equal and unpaſſionate Comportment.

4. *To lay down our Lives for our Religion, whenever it ſhall pleaſe God to call us to it.*

Indeed, this is the greateſt Part of Self-Denial, and *Contempt of the World*, we can arrive to; becauſe all others are but a Subduing Part of our Nature, but this is an Unhinging and a Deſtroying of it. There we conflict only with our Appetites and Paſſions, but here with the deareſt of all Things, even Life itſelf. Let us take but a ſhort View, and ſee what a Noble Part of Self-Denial it is, to lay down our Lives for the Faith, and to take up the Martyrial Crown, with all the Agonies and Terrors which ſurround it. Let us conſider how grating it is to Fleſh and Blood, to leave the Light of the Sun, and all the Gaieties and Pleaſures of this World, for a dark and an unknown State; to undergo Pains never yet experienced, that overwhelm the Thoughts with diſmal Ideas, and direful Expectations; to ſtruggle with our Friends and Relations, that are furniſhing us with fallacious Ar-

guments to beguile our Consciences, and to deny the Truth; to conflict with all the Allurements and Blandishments this World affords, our Acquaintance, our Kindred, a large Estate, or the Expectation of a better; to lie exposed to all the Temptations of the Devil, that now musters up his whole Power and Strength to attack us; and yet resolutely to lay down our Life upon a Conscience of our Duty. Here we have no Drums and Trumpets to animate our Courage, no Rage and Passion to inspire a Boldness, but walk melancholy to Execution, amidst the disdainful Reproaches of our Adversaries, and in cold Blood and sedate Thoughts we part with our Life for Christ's Sake. Here is no Encouragement to be had from a numerous Multitude, that back on one another by a mutual Example, and all together run into a Danger which none of them understand; here we are not buoyed up with the Hopes of surviving and sharing the Triumphs of the Victory: But we go to the Stake with the Dissuasion of our Friends, and the Exprobrations of our Enemies; we march courageously on at the same time when we are certain to die, and resolutely encounter Death's Terrors, whilst it is in our Power to escape them. This indeed is to deny ourselves, and to follow

follow the Commands and Example of our Blessed Lord, who *laid down his Life for us*, who has commanded us to *take up his Cross*, and to *rejoice when we are Partakers of his Sufferings*; and therefore to decline this Call, is basely to desert our Lord's Service, to trample under Foot his most Special Commands, and to forfeit all our Title to his Merits.

SECT. VII.

That a Contempt of the World doth consist in setting our Affections upon God and Heavenly Things.

HItherto Morality has shewed us the Way *to contemn the World*, and the dusky Lamp of Nature has gone before us, affording us Light enough to discover the Vanities thereof, and shewing us how unreasonable and dishonourable it is for a Rational Creature to be defiled by those Pleasures, or overcome by those Passions, which betray him into Covetousness and Excess, Pride and Impatience. For many of the *Heathen* World have been Eminent in those Vertues we have been hitherto describing; or at least they have pretended to them as much as the devoutest *Christian*. They have been so *magnanimously* Brave, as to scorn to do a base Thing, for the

the Sake of the Honourableness of Vertue, and the Turpitude of Vice: They have despised all the *Riches* of the World with the most fastidious Contempt; they have been *temperate*, *modest*, and *chaste*, to Admiration; they have neglected all proffered *Honour*, and affected the meanest Obscurity; they have borne Pain with an invincible Patience, out-faced Death itself with a stupendous Bravery; and by the severest Discipline have subdued their Bodies to the Empire of the Soul: But yet there are some farther Heights which Christianity enjoins, that are necessary to a true Contempt of the World, and which the *Heathens* were ignorant of. And those are contained in that former Part of the Apostle's Precept, *Set your Affections on Things above, and not on Things on the Earth*, *Col.* iii. 2. Now, a great Number of them, like Men of Sense and Spirit, thought these little Things *upon the Earth*, were too vile to *set their Affections on*, and that it would reflect upon their Rationality to be enamoured with such fleeting Pleasures: But then they were unable to perform the former Part of the Command; for they had but very imperfect Notions of those *Things above*, which are the true and noble Objects of our Affections. These clear Manifestations which God has been pleased

pleased to make to us of his Nature, and the unquestionable Promises he has given us of an eternal Reward in another Life, have in them a Magnetick Attraction to raise our Affections a great deal higher, to hinder their dull Weight from pulling them downwards to the Earth, and do as it were draw them to another Center. Morality indeed might effect, that a Man should not lie groveling upon the Ground, and wallowing in sensual Pleasures; it would enable him in some Measure to stand erect, like a reasonable Creature, and not to stoop down to every puny Object that lay before him; but those happy Revelations, which our Religion affords us, inspire us with a sort of Angelical Nature, they join the *Seraph* and the Man together, they add Wings to the Soul, and make her take her Flight toward Heaven. Now, this Setting our Affections on Things above, this Spiritual-Mindedness, which is so much commended in Scripture, does consist in these two Particulars.

I. *In a hearty Love of God.*
II. *An earnest Desire of Eternal Happiness.*

I. In a hearty Love of God.

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By the *Love of God*, I do not understand here the whole Duty of the Christian Religion; for the Love of God sometimes signifies as largely as the *Fearing* him does, that is, the doing every Thing which God commands to the utmost of our Power; and then the Love of God takes in all the Duties of Morality and Revealed Religion. As the Apostle takes it, *Rom.* viii. *Every Thing worketh for Good to them that love God.* So 1 *Cor.* ii. *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear hath heard the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* Neither do I mean any unusual transported Spirit of Mind, by which the Soul is generally filled with Exultations and Raptures, whenever it happens to think of God. For these, where they are found, are rather the Effects of Mens bodily Constitutions, than the peculiar Symptoms of a true Christian Love; which is best when it is constant, and even throughout the whole Course of our Lives, and does not take us by Fitts and Spurts. Where-ever such passionate Returns of Zeal are found, they are good Signs and Indications of Piety, but they are not Piety itself; they do usually shew a Man to be good, but they do not make him so; such heated Transports do no more entitle a Man to the Love of God, than an excessive

excessive Custom of Laughter entitles him to be a risible Creature. But by a Love of God, *I understand that Complacency which we take in the Deity, arising from the Consideration of the Excellence of his Nature, and his Bounty to us.* For any Thing may be render'd the Object of our Love, either by having very great Perfections and Excellencies in itself, or by the procuring us any considerable Benefit. Now, for both these Reasons we ought to love God, or to set our Affections upon him.

1. Because he is the most Perfect and Admirable Being.
2. Because he is the most Kind and Bountiful to us.

First, Because he is the most Perfect and Admirable Being:

Therefore, in order to a just Contempt of the World, and a Setting our Affections upon God, we must,

1. *Study and admire the Perfections of the Divine Nature.* It will be an intolerable Shame for us, when God has made Us alone, of all his Creation here below, capable of contemplating his Nature; that We should think as little of it as the Cattle do; that we should employ all our Thoughts about the *brutal* Part of ourselves, and think of Nothing suitable to that

that nobler Part of us, which alone denominates us *Men*; and that we should drive away out of our Minds the Consideration of the admirable Excellencies of the Divine Nature, which are the properest and the most worthy Objects of them. Not that we should, with a bold Inquisitiveness, pry into the Mysteriousness of the Divine Attributes, farther than God has revealed them to us, or that we should think we shall be ever able to come to a complete Knowledge of any of them; for the Nature of God is such a boundless Ocean of Wonders, such a fathomless Depth of unaccountable Mysteries, that the closer Thoughts of him make our Heads turn round, and distract and confound our Imaginations: But we should, with an humble Admiration, adore those Excellencies of His, which by our Natural Reason, or by His Holy Word, he hath been pleased to manifest to us. We should, with the profoundest Reverence, think of, and admire the *Eternity* of his Being; that he always was what he now is, exquisitely perfect, and full of Himself, before all Ages; that he is the One only, uncreated, independent Cause, that spoke all Things out of Nothing into their Beings, and was Himself the only Self-existing One; that he was innumerable

Millions

Millions of Ages before the Chronicle of Time, or the Remembrance of the oldeſt Angel; that did eternally diſplay the vaſt Fecundity of Himſelf in the adorable Trinity; that ſhall laſt beyond all the Periods of Time, and Power of Fate, and ſhall keep, whatever of his Creatures he pleaſes, within the everlaſting Womb of his neceſſary Subſiſtence. We ſhould make it our Buſineſs devoutly to conſider the unconceivable Greatneſs of his *Omnipotent* Power, which is bounded by no Force, and can ſurmount all Difficulties; that can, by the leaſt Word make Thouſands of New Worlds ſpring up throughout the dark extramundane Spaces, and can, when he pleaſes, unſpeak this again into Nothing. We muſt admire the boundleſs Extent of his *Knowledge*, that ſees all the Actions and Motions in the whole World, by one intuitive Glance of his Knowledge; that from all Eternity foreſaw every Thing which was to be, with all its Circumſtances and Relations, when they all lay wrapt up in the Womb of a Thouſand forerunning Cauſes; that dives into all the clancular Thoughts and Intentions of Mens Hearts, and knows their Reſolutions before they have determined them. We ſhould profoundly reverence and adore that admirable *Holineſs* of

of his Nature, which is so essentially pure and good, that there is not the least Stain in his Thoughts, the least Corruption or Pravity in all his Actions; nothing but what is most exquisitely Good and Holy; nothing but what is grounded upon the eternal Rules of Vertue; nothing but what does exactly agree to his Infallible Judgment, and what his Eternal Wisdom does judge fit to be done. We must consider, that he does not, like us, give his Assent to what is good, but may be hinder'd from prosecuting it by a stubborn Will, and disorderly Affections; that he does not use unrighteous Means to accomplish his Designs, never projects any Contrivance, but what does uniformly agree with the Dictates of his most Rectified and All-wise Understanding. We should likewise set ourselves frequently to meditate upon the *Truth* or *Veracity* of this admirable Being; we should think that we do not worship such a God that will cheat and deceive us, that only sooths us up with fair Words and empty Promises, and means nothing less than what he tells us; that does not keep up his State like Princes of this World, by political Tricks and Amusements, or aggrandize Himself, by imposing upon, and deluding his Creatures; but such an one, whose

whose Actions always agree to his Words, and his Words always correspond with his Mind; so that whatever God reveals to us, we may be sure it is true; whatever he tells us is our Duty, we may be satisfied it is such; whatever he threatens, we may be certain he will inflict; whatever he promises, we may be confident he will make good. *Let God be True, and let every Man be a Lyar*, says the Apostle; that is, that God is so essentially True, that every Man is a Lyar in respect of Him; Truth is so interwoven in his Nature, that it is his very Being and Essence; it is as impossible for Him to lye, as it is for Him not to be; as he necessarily is, so he necessarily is True, and we may be as certain of his Veracity, as we are of his Being. We must attentively consider likewise the never-swerving *Justice* of our great Creator, who does not dispose of every Thing at Random, heaping his Favours upon those that slight and despise Him, and oppressing his poor Creatures, who, with an humble Obedience, to the utmost of their Power direct their Actions according to his Laws; that does not suffer his Commands to be trampled upon with Impunity, and permit so many profligate Sinners to live all their Time blaspheming God, and injuring

Men; preying upon the Innocent, and wantoning upon the Spoils of Orphans and Widows; that does not tamely suffer ambitious *Nimrods* to ravage the World at their Pleasure; to wade through the Blood of Millions of Innocents, to purchase their Glory; to raise their Fame upon the Ruins of so many Countries, without any Pretence, but only to sacrifice to their wicked Ambition; that does not suffer such prosperous Villains to live on in a constant Tide of Happiness in this World, and drop into the other, just like other Men; but does wisely take Care, that, as they have had their good Things in this World, they shall have their Evil ones in the next; and shall there pay severely for all those insolent Crimes which went unpunish'd here; because, perhaps, their Fortune had raised them above their Punishment; or, because their Sins had swell'd to that unmeasurable Bulk, as had made them fit Victims only for the eternal Vengeance. So we ought to let our Minds, with the greatest Deliciousness and Satisfaction, dwell upon the Contemplation of God's *Mercy*, which is not any weak womanish Pity, which renders him unable to prosecute his Justice, because of the Cries of suffering Offenders, or which will not let him punish even

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his beloved Favourites, when they deserve it; but such a wise Relaxation and Mitigation of the Severity of his Justice, such an Inclination to our Welfare and Happiness, as puts him upon all possible means of Redeeming us from Misery. We can never enough think of the miraculous Goodness of this Divine Attribute, that makes God take greater Care to preserve and succour us, than we can for ourselves, and be as willing to relieve us from Misery and Oppression, as we can be to be relieved; that will incline him to remove those Pressures which lie so hard upon us, and to suffer our Afflictions to gall and wound us no longer than they serve for our Benefit and Advantage; and, that if, for Reasons best known to his All-wise *Discretion*, he shall not withdraw his afflicting Hand in this World, he will then more abundantly reach out his Mercies to us in the next; when the Joys and Triumphs of that Life shall infinitely compensate all the Troubles and Anxieties of this. That stupendous *Mercy*, which will deliver our Souls, as well as our Bodies, from all Calamities which are incident to them; from all the spightful Temptations of Evil Angels, and from the Fraud and Malice of the Devil; that will support us under the direful Pressures of a wounded

wounded Spirit, and the ſharpned Stings of an accuſing Conſcience; the Contemplation of which will give the Repenting Sinner a comfortable Aſſurance of his Pardon, whilſt a naked View of his Juſtice only will frighten him into Deſpair and Confuſion. Now, when we devoutly conſider and meditate, as we ſhould do, upon theſe glorious Perfections, we cannot but love and admire that wonderful Being that is the Subject of them; and in Compariſon of him, to deſpiſe all that we call Excellent in this World, which are only ſome glimmering Rays of Beauty, which ſtream from him the inexhauſtible *Fountain* of Light, which are only ſome little *Rills* and *Streams* from the *boundleſs Ocean* of his Perfections.

2. To love God, as he is the moſt perfect Being, is, *to endeavour to our utmoſt to imitate him, and act agreeably to his Nature.* Whenever we have an extraordinary Opinion, a profound Veneration, and Admiration of, and an hearty Love for any one, we endeavour to our utmoſt to imitate the Excellency we find in him; we make it our Buſineſs to write our Lives after his Copy, and to tranſcribe his Example into all our Actions; and this is viſible, not only in the vertuous Actions of great Men, but even in the lit-

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tle minute Graces and Gestures of their Body, which are greedily catched at, and taken up by their admiring Beholders. Therefore, when God is such a Being, in whom all imaginable Perfections do concenter, and all possible Excellencies do shine forth, we cannot pretend to any tolerable Degree of Love and Admiration towards him, unless we do our utmost to copy after so noble a Pattern, and to make our Actions suit to that so divine an Original. For it is not in the least probable, that ever God would have discovered so much of his Nature to us, unless it were for our Imitation; for such Ends, as the Displaying his own Glory, or the Satisfaction of our Inquisitiveness, are Purposes not half so noble and rational, as the Rendring us good and happy by our imitating him, and acting agreeably to his Nature. Therefore, when we consider, that we worship a God that always was, and always will be, that is every where, that knows all things, and can do all things; we ought to make it our Study how to render our Behaviour suitable to so great a God. We must let our Lives be as vertuous as ever we can, that he may reward us; we ought to be most carefully circumspect in every one of our Actions, because his all-seeing Eye is continu-

ally inspecting us; *He knows our Down-sitting and our Up-rising, and considereth our Thoughts long before.* 'Tis in vain to think to find any where such an Umbrage for our Sins, as shall hide them from him; *for whither shall we fly from his Presence?* 'Tis not secret Retirements, and dark Recesses, that can do it; *for the Darkness is no Darkness to him, the Darkness and Light are both alike.* His vast unbounded Being is every where; every where, if we obey him, to succour and reward us; and every where, if we disobey him, to torment and punish us. He is a God *that can do every thing*; to whom the Winds, and the Seas, and all the Powers of Nature obey; he can rescue his Servants whenever he pleases, from the very Jaws of the Lions; with a Blast of his Displeasure, he can sink his Enemies into the Grave; or, with a Stroke of his Anger, he can send them down quick into Hell, with all his Vengeance flaming about them. Therefore, we should take diligent Care, and use all imaginable Caution, not to offend so great a God; who is endowed with such a wonderful Knowledge to detect our Sins, and so much Power to avenge them. If God be a just and holy Being, we must not suffer ourselves to live impure and wicked Lives, but must serve him with Holiness and

and Purity; for we can never think to be acceptable Votaries to so holy a Deity, to whom we may be so utterly unlike, when we have all the Stains of our Sins about us; we can never think that that pure unspotted Mind should take Pleasure in them who live in so much Turpitude, and in such a Sink of sensual and beastly Vices, as if they were Worshippers of a heathen *Bacchus*, or a *Flora*. If he be a *true* God, and of infinite Veracity, then we must imitate his Truth; we must not lye and be false to one another, and we must not pay a dissembled and hypocritical Worship to him, and before his all-searching Eyes. Seeing he is a *just* God, we must have a care how we offend him; we must not stretch and tenter his Mercy, when we know his Justice is infinite too; for though his Mercy be infinite, and can never be out-sinned, yet our Lives are finite, and may be snatched away from us; so that we may never be able to lay hold of his Mercy, and then we must be for ever delivered up to Justice. If he be a *merciful* God, we must have a care that we do not abuse his Mercy, and weary out the Long-suffering of God, by continually straining it with our repeated Provocations; we must have a care too, that we do not undervalue it,

by a total Despair of it; for this would be to dethrone God, and to deify our Sins, by making them more effectual and powerful than his Mercies, and the Merits of our blessed Redeemer. Now, by doing this, we shall demonstrate, that we truly love God, and set our Affections upon him; when it appears, that we account him, of all the Beings in the World, the fittest to be imitated; and when we endeavour, by all possible means, to render our Lives conformable to that Original, and to leave nothing in them disorderly, and unagreeable to his most absolute Perfections.

Secondly, to place our Affections on God, as we ought to do, we must love him as he is our Benefactor, and the Author of so many Blessings to us. Which is to be done,

1. *By taking notice of, and considering the innumerable Benefits he bestows upon us.*

To account all the Particulars of the divine Beneficence, would be a Task too mighty for any one to undertake, and would swell up such Volumes, that the World could not be able to peruse them. For, in all probability, there is not the least Atome, or Particle of Matter, the least Stir of natural Motion, the smallest Plant, or the minutest Animal, but what

what does contribute some way or other to our Happiness and Welfare here. What admirable Benefits do we receive from the Light, and kind Warmth of the *Sun*, that paints over and gilds the whole Universe with such a Variety of delightful Colours; that directs our Steps, warms our Bodies, and ripens our Fruits? from the *Earth*, whose pregnant Womb brings forth every thing that is useful and beautiful, without which the whole World would be but like the naked Ribs of some ragged Rock, without any Inhabitants upon it? from the *Air*, every Suck of which impregnates our Blood with new Vivacity, and sets this Machine of our Body a moving? from the *Water*, the continual Rarefaction and Condensation of which into Mists and Rains, keeps up the Course of Life and Generation in all Vegetables and Animals? from the *Fire*, which dresses our Food, and comforts our Bodies, without which, a considerable Part of the World would, for a long time in the Year, lie torpid and benumb'd? *Every Man* in the Creation, either by his Labour, or Counsel, or Company, does some way contribute to the Happiness of our Lives; for though we should possess all the World, yet how uncomfortable would it be, to be forced to

do every Thing we have Occasion for, ourselves, and to walk a whole Life out, mopingly alone, without Conversation? What a signal Mark of his Bounty is this *Body* we carry about us; the Contrivance of which is so wonderful and beauteous? What admirable Motions and Secretions are there of the Blood? What wonderful Offices of Veins and Arteries, Nerves and Muscles, that sometimes move on regularly for fourscore Years together, without Check or Intermission? How is it owing to him, that the Body is provided with the useful Organs, for Seeing, Speaking, Hearing, Walking, and a thousand other Conveniencies; the Loss of which would render our Lives strangely uncomfortable? What a multitudinous Production is there every where by his Bounty, of *Trees* and *Plants*, *Fish* and *Fowl*, *Reptils* and *Cattle*; which are all so beautiful to our Prospect, and so subservient to our Use; and which God has wholly subjected to our Dominion? What an unspeakable Token of his Goodness is it, that he has bestowed upon us the Faculty of *Reasoning*? that enables us to deduce Consequences, to project Designs, to understand and conjecture Mens Thoughts, to treasure up Things past, and to provide for the future, when so great a Part of God's Creation want these admi-

rable Blessings, which he has so graciously bestowed upon us. But then further, what an immense Largeness of his Almighty Bounty was it, in redeeming us from a Condition worse than nothing, which our Sins had plunged us into; by sending the Son of his Bosom to die for us, and to make a Propitiation for our Sins; to free us from those Miseries, to which the Lapse of our First Parents, and our own Transgressions had fatally doomed us; and to entitle us to the Rewards of a blissful Eternity? This is such a stupendous Instance of the Divine Beneficence, as makes the Angels not only *desire to pry into*, but causes them to stand amazed and transported; when they think, that God should redeem the forfeited Souls of rebellious Men, with a Ransom of that Infinite Value. Add to this the continual Influxes of God's Holy Spirit; how he moves, inclines, persuades, intreats, and oftentimes over-powers us into Repentance: Add farther, the kind Assistances and Deliverances, which we every Day experience from his particular Providence; how he keeps us from Temptations that lie ensnaring us, and from Perils and Dangers that are threatning us; how he contrives Methods for our Advantage beyond the Reach of our Wisdom, and brings

about our Happineſs in ſuch Degrees, as are above our Hopes and Expectations. Now, how can any one but love ſo good and gracious a God as this? If we find within ourſelves ſuch paſſionate Tendencies of our Souls towards the Earthly Objects of our Affections; if we bear ſo much Love to a Father that begat us, or a Mother that nourished us; if we feel within us ſuch a powerful Bent of our Paſſions, and ſuch a Yearning of our Souls towards our Children, which are only the Offſpring of our Bodies, and the Continuers of our Name and Family; to what Meaſure and Height ſhould our Love of God arrive, who is the Author to us of a thouſand Times more and greater Benefits, and to whom we owe all thoſe other Bounties, which they only, as his Inſtruments, convey to us? O thou great and bountiful Being! who art therefore the more great, becauſe the more bountiful! Thou might'ſt to all Eternity have lain wrapt up within thyſelf, and for ever enjoyed thy own Happineſs, enfolded within thy own Nature; thou might'ſt always have delighted thyſelf with the Proſpect of thy own Glory, and, happy by thyſelf alone, have trodden round the endleſs Tracts of Eternity. But, O thou kind and beneficent Nature! thy Goodneſs

ness was so diffusive, as to communicate itself to a World of Beings; to raise out of nothing so many innumerable Creatures, to drink in the Gleams and Rays of thy overflowing Happiness; to create so many immortal Substances after thy own Image; to make them, as far as their Nature will permit, to partake of thy own Happiness; and to ensure them a Duration of it, co-extended with thy own Being. *Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, praise his Holy Name.*

2. *By shewing all the Signs, and making all suitable Returns we can, of a hearty Love, and a sincere Gratitude.* We must not love so great a Benefactor at a *mean and a common Rate*: We must not suffer our Affections towards him, to be cold and flat, and lifeless; but they must be full of Life and Vigour, Warmth and Alacrity; our Love must not only just keep in, but it must burn and flame before him; it must exert itself in Triumphs and Exaltations of Mind, in cordial Thanksgivings and ardent Devotions. We must not let our Affections be possessed by *any Thing else*, but must be indifferent to Honours and Riches, and all the Glories of this World, when they come in Competition with

him, for he must never be rivalled by such sordid Objects as these; but we must cry out with the *Psalmist*, *There is nothing that I desire in Comparison of thee.* We must be cautious of *giving him any Offence* or Displeasure, but should endeavour to render ourselves as acceptable to him as ever we can; to take Advantage of all Opportunities to approve ourselves to his Liking; to suffer no one, if possible, to stand more in his Favour than we, but to do every Thing that we can to gain his Love and Approbation. We should desire *to converse with him*, as frequently as we can; we should improve all Opportunities to gain time to pray to him, and praise him; to be diligent in studying his Law, and reading his Holy Word; to be constant in the publick Offices, and in private Exercises and Devotions; to take Pleasure in pious Reflexions and Meditations, and in religious Discourse. These are the only Ways now we can converse with God in; and if we truly love him, we shall take as much Delight in this Conversation, as we do in the Company of those we have the greatest Kindness for. We must long *to enjoy him* more fully than now we do, for Love is a Desire of Union; it never rests till it has attained the Center it tends to; every Thing that

keeps

keeps it off from that, offers Violence to it; and therefore we ought to wish, that this dark Curtain of Life were drawn up, which hinders us from looking into the Intellectual World; that this gross Medium of Flesh and Blood, through which our Souls now look, were changed for the Spiritual Body; and that we were let into that State, where we shall no longer *see through a Glass darkly, but shall see God Face to Face*; we should long till these Days of our Pilgrimage are over, and *desire*, with S. *Paul*, *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*. So likewise, to love him is *readily to obey his Commands*; for when we have a hearty Kindness for him, we can never trample upon those Sacred Laws which he has given us; we can never refuse to comply with those Precepts which he has commanded us; we can never complain of the Hardship of those Injunctions he has laid upon us, or do them sluggishly and unwillingly, but shall strive, with all Alacrity, to be the forwardest to fulfill his Pleasure; we should be proud of the Opportunity we have of doing any Thing for him; we should take it as a mighty Favour, that he would be pleased to honour us so far, as to lay his Commands upon us; and should most willingly obey him, altho' we expected no other

Reward, but only the Honour of his having employed us. After this manner we act, in our Demeanor to them whom we sincerely love; and we are apt to suspect the Love of any one, whom we find deficient in any of these Particulars; and therefore can never arrive to the true Excellency of the Spiritual and Divine Love, unless we perform all that is before prescribed.

Objection. But you will say, that you think you otherways lead a Godly and a Christian Life; that you do all the Good, and avoid all the Evil you can; but you cannot find that you love God with that Earnestness and Feelingness that some do; that you never experience that Rapturousness in Devotion, such heated Passions, and such an exundant Zeal, which animate others to do Things in a manner extraordinary, for the Glory of God.

Answer. To this I answer, 1*st*, That those who obey all God's Commands, do love him as they ought, because the loving him is one of his Commands; and because the Love of God does in great Measure consist in keeping his Commands. *He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me*, Joh. xiv.

This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments, 1 John v. 3. And besides, the Loving God with all our Hearts, and above all Things, our constant Praying to him, and Praising him, (which are the great Parts of the Divine Love) are Duties commanded us in Scripture; and therefore we cannot keep his Commands, without performing these. But as for some elevated Heights and Raptures in Devotion, some Over-boilings of Zeal for God's Honour, they are generally the Effect of Mens bodily Constitutions; and to make these absolutely necessary to Salvation, is only to open Heaven's Gates to People of just such a Complexion. *2dly*, There are different Degrees in the Spiritual Life; there is a *Salvable State*, and a *State of Heroic Piety*; so that Men of the first Rank may be content only to go on in the common high Road of Vertue, which does not require any of the sublimated Love of the Heroic Soul; but the other must screw up their Affections to a higher Pitch, must refine themselves more into the Angelick Nature, and give themselves a Fore-taste of the Joys of the other World in this. And I doubt not, but many good Men, if they would endeavour to their Utmost, to make all the Advances they can in Piety, they would soon discover

ver that noble Heights and Raptures, which are so discoursed of in the Descriptions of the *Spiritual Love*, have not so much of the *Enthusiast* in them as is pretended: For I could never be brought over to that Opinion of the *Remonstrants* and *Socinians*, that the Loving God is only a bare Keeping his Commands; that God is to be loved only as a *Legislator*, which is by obeying him; that if we do but obey him, 'tis no matter tho' it be only the Fear of his Punishments that drives us to it; that our Obedience to him, upon account only of Fear, is as noble and as acceptable to him, as that upon the Score of Love; because Fear, forsooth, is one of the two Principles of our Obedience, which he has established. But this is such a poor and a flat Notion of the Divine Love, that I wonder any one, who had read the noble Writings of that divinest of the Apostles, S. *John*, could ever entertain such mean and pitiful Thoughts of that heavenly Passion which he does so every where recommend. For can we ever think, that the Love of *Mary Magdalen*, which was so much applauded by our Saviour, was only a bare cold Obedience to his Commands; that that passionate Expostulation with S. *Peter*, *Simon*, Son of *Jonas*, *lovest thou me?* was nothing else but

but a commanding him to feed his Sheep, and that perhaps out of Fear only? How should ever a Compliance with God's Will, out of Fear of his Punishments, be as acceptable to him, as an Obedience which proceeds from the generous Principle of Love? For the Apostle tells us expressly, that *perfect Love casteth out Fear, because Fear hath Torment; he that feareth, is not made perfect in Love*, 1 Joh. iv. 18. A Man may *begin* the Spiritual Life upon the Principle of Fear, but, to make it *perfect*, he must be wrought upon by Love: The Fears of everlasting Torments may scare a Man from going forwards to Hell; but there must be some Degree of Love to conduct him to the Gates of Heaven. But to make an Obedience to the Divine Will, from the Compulsion of Fear, as noble and as well-pleasing to God, as one that proceeds from a Love of his Goodness, is as absurd as to say, that the willing Obedience of a dutiful Son, and the frank Services of a faithful Friend, are not more generous and brave, than the forced Cringes and Crouches of a Slave, or a Spaniel.

2. To contemn the World as we should do, we must place our Affections upon the Joys which God has promised us hereafter. Which is to be done,

1. By

In believing another State.

1. *By heartily believing all that God has promised of them.*

We can never set our Affections upon that, which we do not stedfastly believe; for neither the Will nor the Affections can tend to what is conceived impossible. A Man may indeed give a random Wish, for that which is never likely to come to pass; but can never rationally, and upon serious Thoughts, be in love with such a Fancy. Therefore, before we can thoroughly place our Affections upon the heavenly Joys, we must fully believe the Reality of them; and that they are of that Greatness and Duration as they are represented: We must be thoroughly persuaded, that God has not made so noble a Creature as Man, to partake only of the gross Pleasures of this World; that he has not implanted in him such an earnest Desire of Immortality, on purpose to delude and deceive him; that he will not permit good Men to suffer so many Calamities in this World, and either to fall to nothing, or to go unrewarded in the next; that our blessed Saviour, by the Merits of his Cross, and Intercession with the Father, has purchased us an *eternal Weight of Glory*; that if we perform the Conditions of that Covenant which he hath made with God for us, and which

is exhibited to us in the Gospel, we shall certainly be Partakers of that blessed State of Immortality which is there promised; that these Joys are not the Dreams of superstitious and enthusiastical People, but such as shall certainly come to pass; that we have as much an Assurance of them, as we can have of any thing that is future, as being confirmed by such infallible and divine Proofs, as will command every one's Belief; unless we could be perswaded, that God would ever lend his own miraculous Power for the Confirmation of Lyes and Impostures.

2. *By diligently considering and meditating upon the Greatness and Eternity of these Joys.* Meditating upon it.

The Enjoyments of the other World are so remote from us, and of such a kind, as our Nature is but little acquainted with; and moreover, worldly Objects are so continually striking upon our Senses, and gratifying them for the present, that unless we frequently give ourselves to a serious Meditation of the Happiness of another Life, they will be as little apt to have an Influence upon us, as if we knew nothing, or believed nothing of them: Which is the Reason why many careless and unconsidering Christians do live as wicked and dissolute, as any Atheists

theists and Infidels in the World. Therefore we should often consider, that Heaven is a State of Blessedness, where we shall be freed from all the *Troubles and Anxieties*, which do so much disquiet this Life of ours; a State where *all Tears shall be wiped from our Eyes*, where we shall have no more sad Tryals and Persecutions, no more Pains and Sicknesses, no more Griefs and Discontents, no more Delays and Disappointments, no more Doubts and Scruples, no more Errors and Misconstructions, no more peevish Contests and Quarrels; Things which so often sowr all the Satisfactions of this World; in short, where there shall be nothing to cross our Inclinations, or disappoint our Desires, nothing to give us the least Vexation or Disquiet. We should frequently bethink ourselves, that we shall then *converse with all the glorious Hierarchy of Heaven*, with so many blessed Saints and Angels, with so many Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs; with so many thousands of happy Saints that have died in the Lord; all which have Minds replenished to amazement with divine Knowledge, and brim-full of Love and Charity. Now, if it be so delightsom to us, to consort with our dear Friends, with the most knowing and pleasant

Company,

Company, if we be so taken with that little Information and Diversion they can give us; how must our Joy abound, to associate ourselves with such angelick and divine Company, that are so profoundly knowing in the eternal and mysterious Truths of the Deity, that have in them all the ravishing Arts of Indearment; to behold their unspotted Souls, and glorified Bodies, to join in the melodious Consort of their heavenly Anthems, and with them to sing everlasting Praises and Hallelujahs? How shall we rejoice to behold the glorified Body of our blessed Redeemer, which was seen in this World in Contempt and Poverty; but shall there be exalted to the greatest Majesty, and shall shine forth ten thousand times brighter than the Sun in his Meridian Glory? We shall then be let into a *closer View of the Essence of God*, and to a nearer Knowledge of the all-great tri-une Deity, that inexhaustible Stock of Mysteries, in the Contemplation of which the lostiest Cherubims lose themselves, and have their Thoughts drowned in the unfathomable Abyss. We should think, how we are then to be completely happy, both Body and Soul, which shall each of them enjoy more Pleasure than they can desire, or

can

can wish for. When we shall be arrayed in a Body more strong and durable than the firmest Adamant, more agil than the nimble Light, more beautiful and glorious than the Sun itself: When our Souls shall be endowed with an unconceivable Capacity of knowing, when our Understandings shall be continually fed with the Knowledge of the most desirable Truths, when the Godhead shall be always more and more revealing and unfolding his Nature to us, and we for ever more and more transcribing the delightful Revelations; when our Wills and Affections shall be fully satisfied by enjoying God, the greatest and sublimest Good; when our Bodies too shall enjoy Pleasures suitable to their spiritualized Nature; when, in short, we shall have all our Appetites satisfied to the brim, without being cloy'd; when our Enjoyments shall out-run our very Desires; when we shall experience more Pleasure in the Fruition, than we could hope for in Expectation. 'Tis in vain farther to go about to describe an inexpressible State of Glory; for when all is said that can be said, all the noblest Metaphors and Illustrations which Rhetorick can afford, or a luxuriant Fancy produce, all will be still flat and low in respect of

the mighty Subject; nay, that all will be no more than what the Apostle has said in a Word: *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear hath heard, neither hath it entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But yet there is one thing we should consider farther, a thing that doubles and trebles, nay, that infinitely enhances all the other Happiness, and adds more to it, than if all the Atoms of the whole Universe were added to one single Unity: I mean the Eternity of it. Eternity! Eternity! A Word big with Wonder and Amazement. An indefectible *Ayeſont*; an unalterable *Now*; a Time that is always beginning, and never ending; that shall be as far from expiring ten Millions of Years hence, as it is at this Moment. Any thing that is eternal, is worth every thing that is temporal; for there is no Comparison between them: The Duration of the one does infinitely surpass the Greatness of the other. Were I but to enjoy the Pleasure I feel now in this delightful Contemplation *for ever, for ever!* Oh it would be a foolish Exchange, to take in lieu of it the Monarchy of these Kingdoms, though it were to the End of the World. What say we then to an Eternity of vast unspeakable Pleasures,

that

that we are to enjoy in the other World? It should certainly, methinks, make us despise all the poor, little, short-lived Things in this: Or surely, one would suppose, no one could be so silly to forfeit his interest in such an eternal Inheritance, for some momentary Trifle here, for the Miser's little Gain, or the Voluptuary's Sensuality. I am sure, *Esau*'s parting with his Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage, and *Mark Antony*'s losing the Opportunity of a Victory for a Mistris, was a considerable Point of Reason and Prudence to such an egregious Piece of Folly and Stupidity as this.

Desiring eternal Happiness. 3. *In earnestly desiring and longing for this Happiness.*

And truly, this is the natural Result of the two former Considerations; for, if we believe and consider the Greatness of those Joys, we cannot, if we would, hinder our Desiring and Longing for them. For, there is such a magnetick, attractive Force in the heavenly Joys, towards those that devoutly contemplate them, that a Man can as soon hate himself, and be out of Love with his own Happiness, as not to long for such Joys that promise such ravishing Pleasure. Therefore, when we think of the other

World,

World, we muſt let all our Affections be center'd there, and think every Minute of our Life adds to our Unhappineſs, that keeps us out from it. We ſhould think it long before our Souls are diſcharged from this dark Dungeon of Clay, before they are delivered from theſe Clogs and Fetters of Fleſh and Blood; before they are manumitted and ſet free into the Intellectual World, and never more to undergo ſuch a deplorable Bondage. We ſhould wiſh that our tedious and hazardous Voyage were at an end, that we might ſee no more thoſe boiſterous Storms we meet with here, that we could but ſafely land that rich Lading we are freighted with, and arrive ſecurely at the bleſſed Haven of Immortality. We ſhould be perfectly impatient till this State of our Probation were over, that we might have no more Doubts and Fears of our Miſcarriage, but that we might enter upon an actual Enjoyment of that Happineſs we aſpire to. We ſhould eagerly deſire that our Race we are running were finiſhed, that we were ſecure of the Prize we are contending for, that we had the Crown upon our Heads we have been ſo long waiting for; and we ſhould eſteem every Thing that retards that our Triumphal

umphal Happiness, as most unlucky and prejudicial to us.

4. And for the Sum of all, *Our Contemner of the World, in order to the Love of God, ought to be constant and earnest in the Duty of Prayer.*

Constant Prayer.

Without a conscientious Discharge of this Duty, there can be no Pretence to the Love of God. For when Men neglect their Devotions, they are so far from loving God, and placing their Affections upon him, that they shew a great Disregard to him, and rather a perfect Enmity towards him. For whatsoever we love, we love to converse with, and to enjoy, as much as we can, its Company and Familiarity. Now Prayer is the only way we have of conversing with God, and therefore, if we do not delight to pray to him, 'tis a most certain Sign we do not sincerely love him. For it is not the bare having August and Noble Conceptions of God, which makes Men love him, because these may arise only from Philosophical Speculations, which may have little or no Influence upon their Lives at all; for it is easy to observe, that many Men, who are deeply versed in the Works of God's Creation, and in Disquisitions about the Nature of his

his Being, do nevertheless lead very loud and flagitious Lives, and are prophane Scoffers at all true Godliness and Religion. But heartily to love God, is to enjoy his Conversation as frequently as we can in devout Prayer; in this holy Exercise to admire his Perfections, and adore his Glory and Happiness; to confess to him our Miscarriages, and to unburden our Consciences before him; to beg his gracious Pardon for us, and to implore his Protection over us, and to praise and adore his Goodness for all his *Bounties* and *Mercies* towards us. A Constancy in this Duty will give us such a Relish of Heavenly Things, will so endear our Affections towards our good God, as will render this Conversation with him more delightful to us, than all other Satisfactions. I appeal to the Experience of any pious regenerate Christian, who has formerly liv'd a Life of Carelessness and Irreligion, if he does not find a wonderful Joy and Satisfaction in his Devotion, and such a ravishing Love of God, as he was a perfect Stranger to before his Conversion. 'Tis in vain therefore to pretend to love God, when either we really neglect our Devotions, or without Occasion frequently omit them, or are glad of any Opportunity to avoid them; when we neglect the Publick Ser-

vice of the Church, or Prayers in our Families and Closets; for all which we have Command in God's Word, which if we disobey, we can have no Pretence to love him, *Joh.* xiv. 21. Let us not therefore (as God knows too many even of the best of us do) neglect this holy Duty, by turmoiling ourselves in a Hurry of Business, or Pursuit of the Pleasures of this Life; but let us rather cut off from our Gains, or deny ourselves our Diversions, or even choose to be uncivil to our importunate Addressers, than to omit our Devotions either Publick or Private. For 'tis most certainly a less Rudeness to make bold with Man, than with God. And let us not be discouraged from a Perseverance in this Duty, that in a prophane Age it is so generally neglected, and by Atheistical Men is so often exposed and ridiculed, under Pretence it is a sawcy Familiarity with God, and a Presumption to direct his Providence; but let us the rather diligently pursue it, because it is so much spoken against by such ill Men; but chiefly because God, our Great Creator has commanded * it; because it is for the bettering of our Natures, and making us solely to depend upon his Good-Will and Pro-

* Vid. *Conference with a Theist*, Part III.

vidence.

vidence. And as for these bold Revilers of God's Worship, they will one Day applaud that Service which they now so prophanely ridicule, and heartily wish they had been devout Partakers in it; but they had best take Care that they do not begin to *ask* when it may be too late to *receive*, and *knock* then when it shall not *be opened unto them*. But more of this in another * Treatise, shortly to be published.

* Vid. *Conference with a Theist*, Part III.

CHAP IV.

Of the Reasons why we should Contemn the World.

IN the foregoing Sections I have been shewing the Reasons, why we should despise those particular Vices, which so great a Number of Men do set their Hearts upon; but now I shall shew, by two or three Arguments, that all those Temptations of the World, which are so apt to ensnare Men into Sin,

are really unworthy of that Affection which Men set upon them; and are fit to be undervalued and contemned by all Men of Religion and ordinary Sense. And of the many Reasons which may be alledged, I shall produce only these few.

I. *The Pleasures of this World ought to be contemned, because they are common to evil Men, as well as to good.*
II. *Because they are so uncertain.*
III. *Because they are in themselves vain and inconsiderable.*
IV. *Because they are unsatisfying.*
V. *Because they are cloying and surfeiting.*
VI. *Because we must in a very little while leave them.*
VII. *Because we are in Pursuit of far greater Pleasures.*

SECT. I.

The Pleasures of this World ought to be contemned, because they are common to evil Men, as well as to good.

WHEN we see Riches and Honours, &c. possessed by evil Men, as well as good, it should, methinks, take off the Edge of our Appetite to them, by considering that such base and sensual Men

Men have the most to do with them, that they have the greatest Share of the good Things of this World, who are the declared Enemies of God, and all good Men. Now, if we account every Thing to lose proportionably of its Value, as it is common to base and ignoble People, if we disdain to imitate our Enemies in any Thing they do; then, with how great Scorn should we look down upon all the Glories of this World, which are possessed by Men, whom Vice has debased to the utmost Contempt? With what a disdainful Eye should we behold them, when they are used by those that are avowed Enemies to our great Creator; and are of such different Principles and Practices from us? So again, methinks, any reasonable Man should think fit to despise that, which God, the Wisest of all Rational Beings, does think fit to undervalue. Now, we find, that God sets so little Esteem upon the Pleasures of this World, that he suffers his greatest Enemies quietly to enjoy them; he thinks it not worth his while to put them out of Possession of them in this Life; he reckons them such inconsiderable Trifles, and to be enjoyed for so short a time, that it is beneath the Dignity of his Providence, to adjust the Distribution of 'em here, especially when they

they are to pay so dearly for their Sins hereafter. Therefore, unless we think ourselves wiser than God, we should think them little and inconsiderable too, and should conclude they are not noble enough to set our Hearts upon, when the Providence of God, that (as the Scripture tells us) takes notice of the Sparrows, and the Hairs of our Head, does hardly vouchsafe a Cognizance of them. And lastly, when we see such great Honours, and vast Estates possessed by wicked Men, and so many of God's dearest Saints lying in the most forlorn State of Poverty; it should strangely lessen our Esteem of those Things which God seems purposely to keep away from his best Servants. For God generally has another Sort of Discipline for Good Men to go through in this World, Hardships and Troubles, Care and Afflictions, or Want and Poverty. *If any Man* (says our Saviour) *will be my Disciple, let him take up his Cross, and follow me.* That is, if any Man will be my Disciple, he must partake of my Cross; if he will fight under my Banner, he must drink of my Cup; but if he be so tender and delicate, that he cannot down with Afflictions, he is no fit Follower of me, the persecuted *Jesus*, who am a *Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief*; my

Religion

Religion does not entitle Men to Beds of Down and Ivory, when I myself *have not where to lay my Head.* And the Apostle reads us just the same Lecture, *Heb.* xii. 7, 8. *If you endure Chastening, then God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he, whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without Chastisement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons.* And upon this Account it was, that several pious Christians of old Time, having found themselves to have enjoyed a very great Share of the Happiness of this World, have prayed to God, that he would be pleased to visit them with some Affliction or other, that might somewhat abate their uninterrupted Prosperity, lest such a constant Tide of worldly Happiness should preclude them from God's Favour, and be a Bar to their Legitimacy in Grace. Now, though I will not affirm, that Riches, and Honours, and other Pleasures of this World, are Things to be prayed against, or that Afflictions are to be desired; yet these last are such usual Concomitants of Piety, that, when a Man finds himself carried on in a constant Series of Prosperity, without any Mixture of Crosses and Troubles, it will be apt to make him mistrust his Condition, and raise some Misgivings within

him, that he is not among the Number of God's Children, upon whom the Gospel does entail so many Calamities and Sufferings. And therefore certainly every prudent Christian will retain but little Esteem and Love for those Things which may put his Soul to so much Hazard, and occasion so great a Distrust of his future Happiness.

SECT. II.

We ought to contemn this World, because the Pleasures of it are so uncertain.

NOthing is truly valuable, the Duration of which is not ascertained to us, and the End of which we are shortly like to see. And this is the Reason, as I observed before, why Eternity was the most inestimable Thing that could be, because it has that Certainty of continuing always. Now, this Truth is likewise confirmed by the common Judgment and Opinion of all Mankind, who for this Reason esteem a great Man himself happier, than those who are about him, and converse with him; for tho' they often have as pleasant a View of his stately House and costly Furniture, and do frequently partake of all the Delicacies of his Table, yet this is but now and

then,

thin, or as long as he pleases; whilst he is supposed to have the Enjoyment of them for his Life, and without Controul. Now the Pleasures of this World are so very uncertain, and we can depend upon them so little, that to set a mighty Value upon them for our short precarious Possession of them, is as ridiculous as for a Man to pride himself upon his now and then dining at Court, or his walking in the Park, as much or more than if he were the great Lord and Owner of them both. For really there are none of all the gay Pleasures, which Men are so enamoured with, but are as uncertain as ever the Wheels of Fortune can make them. To give but an Instance or two; one would think, that a *large Estate* were too big a Thing to be whisked away after Fortune's Chariot; and yet she seems to be more humourfome in nothing, than in the Disposal of these. We make indeed a great Bustle to get an Estate, which we think will perpetuate our Name and Family; we pretend thus we buy it for ever, but there is never a greater Solecism in our Language, and we are never more miserably deceived than in this: For there is not one Estate in forty, that directly continues in the same Family it was in Mens Hands the Fs time, which is not

yet a hundred Years ago; and for ought I know, 'tis probable that this Spot of Ground I now tread upon, since the Conquest, which is not much above six hundred Years, may have had one hundred Owners. But alas! an Estate is so far from being apt to continue in a Family, that it often leaves us before we die. How many brave flourishing Estates have been lost only by espousing a weaker Faction in the State; and have in an Instant been swallowed up in the Victor's Booty? How many have been decayed and lost by the Calamities and Charges of Wars, how many by providing for a great Number of Children, and how many by the Miscarriage of them? How many by unexpected Losses, how many by ill Titles, and how many more by the Riot and Luxury of the Owners? So that he that looks upon an Estate, as a certain Thing, may with more Sense think the Wind and the Weather so. For these, though they are very variable, yet they have their Vicissitudes, and turn about to the same Point again; but an Estate once gone from us, is never likely to return. And so it happens in the Case of *Honour*, which is one of the most uncertain fickle Things we can possess: Let a Man but once lose his Estate, and his Honour will be soon

pour

poor a Thing to support itself. Every body will slight and despise such indigent Dignity: A necessitous Lord grown cheap and contemptible to a wealthy Ale-House-Keeper. How many great Sejours have we seen, that whilst they have kept their Princes Favour, have had the Knees and Tongues of half the Nation at their Devotion, whom their Flatterers have in a manner deified and adored; when they have no sooner fell into Disgrace with their Prince, but their Honour has seem'd putrified in the Nostrils of Men; who have at last vilified and affronted them more, than they ever before respected them? What Fame is so bright, which is not to be sullied by the defamatory Tongues of malicious Men? The Regal Honour is the greatest, and the least liable to Diminution, because the Vulgar are apt naturally to admire such Greatness, and not to see or believe Faults, in the midst of so much Splendor; and yet we have known that the best, perhaps, of Kings, that was a Glory to the Diadem, lost his Honour with the greatest Part of his Subjects, by the virulent Libels and malicious Infinuations of some few Republican Spirits, who lyed him, as much as in them lay, both out of his Life and Innocency. Again, what a terrible

Thing is Beauty, which so many others have, and are proud of in themselves? The best Face cannot be insured against the Small-pox only: Nay, twenty other Diseases will turn the most celebrated Beauty into a Spectacle of another kind. Or, if neither of these chance to do it, Age will do it effectually; and there is not much of Age required neither; for the Loss of Beauty is ordinarily survived thirty or forty Years; therefore, all such should be cautious how they value themselves over-much upon that, which they may possibly *ten* or *fifteen* Years, but if they live out their time, they must be without *forty*.

SECT. III.

The Pleasures of this World ought to be contemned, because they are in themselves vain and inconsiderable.

AS for that great Pleasure of being *rich*, it is really one of the greatest Vanities; for though Wealth be well used by spending it as handsomly as one can, yet, if we consider, it makes a Man as ridiculous as *Seneca*, surnamed *Grandio*, whom *Seneca* so laughs at in his Controversies; that would have his Servants, his

his Pleasure, his Wisdom, and Honour, his Nobility, and all, of a hundred Kinds. So a rich Man must have a great House, a great many Servants, a great deal of Wealth, a great deal of Company, a great deal of Formality, and a great deal of Impertinency; when one quarter of any of it, and none of some of it, would do far better. There is, no doubt, such a Thing as true *Honour* in the World, there is, the just Praise Men attain for their Vertue and Bravery; but that which is generally reputed such, and which most Men aim at, is one of the vainest Things in Nature. What a Business is a great swelling Title, for a Man to pride himself upon? They are just so many Words of Names, which will neither make a Man wiser nor better. They are such, as a Herald can produce a hundred of them in an Hour; and such as the poor barbarous People out-do us in; for the Style of a little petty Prince, in the *East-Indies*, out-swaggers, for the generality, the Medals of *France*. I am apt to think, that an old *Greek* or *Roman*, who knew no *Honour* but what followed the Office, would have laughed heartily to have seen our modern Lists of Nobility; to read of Barons and Counts, Marquisses and Dukes of such Places, where, perhaps, they

they have not one Foot of Land, or one Jot of Interest. These Titles, 'tis true, are Marks of Distinction, which the supreme Magistrate in every Nation gives forth, to shew what Place each one should take in the Common-wealth, and every one is obliged to maintain, and to give place accordingly; but to think that there is more than this in these Titles, or that they do conferr a real Worth, where there is none before, or to behave ourselves haughtily upon this Account, is only to be proud of bare *Feers's* and Feathers. And so again, as for that all-glorious Thing called *Fame*, that great Bait for ambitious Spirits; it is too pitiful a Thing to be courted at so passionate a Rate. Obscurity, and the not being taken notice of, is a thing which most Men mortally hate; but it is, because they do not enough consider its Advantages. But be that as it will, yet what Advantage does a Man get by being much talked of, and much stared at; by being much admired and praised by some, and much censured by others? Could we arrive to all the Fame we aim at, it would be but a silly Thing when it was attained; but not the thousandth part of those that desired to be famous, ever could be so. There are not much above half a score Names, of so many

many Millions of People that lived in the Heathen World, that are really famous now, and are in every body's Mouth; such as the Authors of two or three Philosophical Sects, as *Aristotle*, *Plato*, and *Epicurus*; or some great Warriors, as *Alexander*, and *Cæsar*, and the like; and these are known only by the Sound of the Names, and nothing else to most People; but all the other Multitude of Antiquity are either totally lost in their Graves, or some few of them known only by some *Bookish* Men. Nay, if a Man has only a Design upon Fame, as long as he lives, it is but a very little Portion of it, which he is like to get. For a Man should consider, that there are so many Men in the World, that every body is not like to know every body. A chief Minister of State in *France* is not, I believe, personally known to the thousandth part of that Kingdom, nor by his Name to a hundredth part of this; and yet how many Millions of Men are there, that are never likely to be a quarter so famous as Monsieur *Colbert*, or Monsieur *Pompone*? The Nobility of the Nation, and the prime Officers at Court, are those that are the most famous amongst us; and yet they are utterly unknown by so much as their Titles to the greatest

part

part of the Nation; and in the rest, mostly by Lists and by Hear-say. One that makes a very great Figure among us here, is never heard of perhaps in *Germany* or *Denmark*. But if Fame consists only in being known and admired; then our Mountebanks and Players are the famousest Men in all the Kingdom; and therefore 'tis hardly worth any wise Man's while, to seek after that which the Refuse of the Kingdom can so easily attain to. Well, but is not Fame after Death a noble Purchase? Why truly I think but an indifferent one for a Christian to trouble himself about; who expects some other Pleasures after Death, than the being talked of. The Heathens, 'tis true, were very fond of this, a *Fulva clara per ora virtus* was all they had to comfort them against the Fears of Death, when they wanted the Revelation of another State; but they are in some measure to be excused, because they found within themselves an impetuous Desire of Immortality, and could not easily see any other Way to effect it, but only by this. But for us Christians, to despise the Joys of Paradise for the Clattering of Peoples Tongues, is an unpardonable Affront offer'd to our Religion; it is a worse Indignity put upon God, than

than the *Israelites* longing for Garlick and Onions, when they fed upon the Food of Angels. But waving this Argument, What good does Fame after Death do any Man? I will instance in the most famous Man of all Antiquity, I mean *Aristotle*; for as for *Alexander* and *Cæsar*, I look upon them to be infamously so, far beneath that Wretch that burnt the *Ephesian* Temple; two barbarous Butchers of Mankind, that cut the Throats of so many innocent People, to sacrifice to their wicked Ambition. I say *Aristotle*, he that was Tutor (if that be any Fame) to the greatest Conqueror in the World; that had the most universal Genius of all the Sons of *Adam*; that brought Philosophy into some Method and Intelligibleness, which was Cant and Jargon before; that was, I may say, the Inventor of Logick, that great Pillar of Reason; that was so admirable a Critick in Poetry, that both *Epick* and *Lyrick*, as well as the *Dramatick*, will stand obliged to him eternally; that gave the most admirable Rules in Rhetorick, which ever the World had, or I dare say, ever shall have; that wrote such a System of Morality, as was never equalled, till the Sermon upon the Mount; whose Physiology was better than the best of his Time, and will still be in Reputation

tion and Request, when the *Cartesius's* and *Gassendus's* shall not be heard of; whose Heterodoxies in Divinity are better defended, than other Mens Truths; whose Books have been read ten thousand times over, and as many Volumes of Comments wrote or printed upon them; who was almost the only Study of learned Men for many Ages, whose Assertions are taken, in most Controversies, as undoubted Axioms, and are defended every day in most of the famous Schools of *Europe*; to whom we are obliged for our usual Distinctions and Terms of Art in our ordinary Discourse, such as *Material*, *Formal*, *Subject*, *Object*, &c. which were first of his Coining: I say *Aristotle*, that has all this Fame entailed upon him, can receive no Benefit from it after Death. If he be happy, he has something better to busy his Thoughts about; or, if he be miserable, it will not relieve him. If he has ceased to be, he knows nothing of it now; and before his Death, he could never have expected it. So that in short, as to all the Good this Fame can have done this great Philosopher since his Death, he had e'en as good have been *Cleanthes*, *Syrippus*, *Crantor*, or *Carneades*, for whom we are beholden to other Authors, that we know any thing of.

Next,

Next, as to the ſenſual Pleaſures of this World, that Men run with ſo great a Guſt and *Impetus* to it; they are all of them ſo vain and inconſiderable in themſelves, that one would wonder, that ever Men could be ſo fooliſh, to put their Souls to ſuch infinite Hazard, for ſuch Trifles. For moſt of the greateſt Pleaſures we can enjoy, amount to no more than the freeing us from ſome Indiſpoſition, and bringing us to a State of Indolence or want of Pain. What is the Pleaſure of Eating and Drinking, but only the Aſſwaging the Uneaſineſs of our Hunger and Thirſt; which when they are over, the Pleaſure is gone? What is all the Delight of our uſual Sports and Paſtimes, but only ſome artificial Methods, to paſs away the tedious Minutes of our uncomfortable Time? Nay, as for thoſe Pleaſures which ſeem to have more Poſitiveneſs in their Nature, they are all ſo fleeting and vaniſhing, that we have loſt them, before we can be well ſaid to have them.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

The Pleasures of this World ought to be contemned, because they are unsatisfying.

NOW the Pleasures of this World are *unsatisfying*, upon these three Accounts.

1. Because they are not the true Good of the Soul. Now the Nature of the Soul, as of every Thing else, can never be satisfied, but with that which is, or which tends to its own Good. We may indeed delude it, and put Tricks upon it, and quiet its Appetite for some time; but its Desires will still spring up afresh, and will be fully satisfied with nothing, but what tends to its true Happiness and Perfection. Thus we see a great Number of Men live on jollily as they suppose, in an entire Pursuit of Sensual Pleasures; and think by these to gratify their impatient Desire of Happiness they find their Souls always to return; but whenever they give themselves Leave to think, they perceive their Minds to recoil upon them; they feel their Enjoyments they have glutted them with, sit uneasy on them; they find, that these earthly Delights are no fit Food for the Soul, that the more we cram her with

with these sort of Dainties, the more she starve her. For in good Reality we may as well think to satisfy our Stomachs with Stones and Pebbles, as our Souls with Riot and Luxury; we may as well try to nourish our Bodies with Arguments and Notions, as our Minds with Eating and Drinking. We may indeed by long Custom bring our Soul into such a Disease, as to think this Trash more palatable than at first; but we can never make it so natural to her, but that she must sometimes dislike it, especially when she finds it is like to ruin and destroy her. So that if we would have true Satisfaction in this World, we should endeavour to satisfy our *Souls*, which are truly we; and that is, by a Course of Vertue, and the Study of Knowledge; but without these, let us do or possess what we will, we shall be miserable in the greatest Glut of Pleasures.

2. The Pleasures of this World are unsatisfying, because they promise more Enjoyment than they can give. I know not upon what Account it is, whether that Divine Judgment is so blinded by the Subtilty of the Devil, or by the Imposing of their own Desires, that they should fancy there is more Enjoyment in any Sensual Pleasure, than they find in it.

But

But I appeal to the Experience of all Men, if it be not so. With what Impatience doth the young Heir wait for the Estate he is entitled to? How doth he long to be freed from the Yoke of Parents and Tutors? What Pleasure does he cut out for himself in the full Possession of so large a Fortune? But when the good old Parent is gone to his Fathers, and the impatient Successor has possessed his Place, he finds his Condition altered not one Jot for the better; and he perceives now at last, that he must undergo the Trouble also of that Estate, all the Pleasures of which he enjoyed before. What strange Ideas of Happiness does the eager Competitor for a Preferment raise in his Brain? What Wealth and Honour, what Pleasure and Satisfaction does he promise to himself, if he can but succeed in his Design? And when he does succeed, how flatly doth every Thing answer his Expectation, how ordinary do those fancyed Joys appear, and how doth he find himself not at all happier than before his Competition? It is needless to give more Instances for this Truth, because all Men are convinced of it: And therefore it is Matter of Wonder, that they do not, with Joint Consent, undervalue and de-

spise

spise those Pleasures, which put such an apparent Cheat upon all Mankind.

3. *They are unsatisfying, or they have much Evil or Sorrow mixed with them.*

Men may be apt to think, that there is no Happiness like the *Regal Glory*, that no Joys on this side Heaven are like those of the glittering Diadem; but alas! they never consider, what a Pain it is to have the Cares of a whole Nation in one Breast; to have one's Patience racked and tattered by unwelcome Petitions; to have one's Quiet every Minute disturbed by importunate Addresses; to be forced against one's Stomach upon constant Business; to be so full of Caution and Dread, of treading any Step awry; to be continually thinking how to hush up Differences in State, and how to reconcile contrary Factions; how to appease Enemies, and to gain Friends; in short, how to manage, and how to humour so many thousand peevish and discontented Spirits. *Places of Honour* are dazzling Things to look upon, and which all ambitious Men desire; but then they do not consider the Variableness and Danger of them. That such great Men, as they are high, they are always tottering; that then Envy is continually

ready

ready to trip up their Heels: And that their *Elevation* will but make their *Fall* the heavier. *Riches* indeed are Things which all Men are desiring, Courtiers begging, Churchmen soliciting, and Tradesmen getting; but let a Man cast up all the Trouble he must take along with them; the Pains in purchasing them, the Care in keeping them, and the Vexation he may have in losing them; and at length he will find, that he shall not be much the happier for them. Let the dissolute *Voluptuary*, that thinks he engrosses all the Joys of the World to himself, and drinks full Draughts of unmixed Pleasures; that despises all those melancholy Religious, and thinks there is no other Satisfaction, besides his *Vive hodie*; let him but compute how much Tirelsomeness there is in a dissolute Course of Life, how much Sickness is undergone by repeated Debauches, what a Sink of Diseases a Man's Body is made by a Habit of Lewdness; and then let him speak of the great Pleasures of such a Life.

Nay, as for *Wisdom* itself, unless it be the Religious care in caring for our Souls, it is as full of Torment and Vexation as any Thing else. And if we reflect

ſuit upon the great Toil and Fatigue there is in acquiring it; ſuch how much Tediouſneſs and Difficulty the firſt Elements of Learning are attended with; how great a Part of Life is ſpent in a bare Learning of Letters and Words; what a few Things the greateſt Sages are capable to know; and what an Infinity of but they are forced to be ſatisfied with; how much Error abides even in the moſt prudent Diſpoſitions; and how the beſt Mens Judgments are blinded with Prejudices and Prepoſſeſſions; how much Peeviſhneſs and Ill Humour galls and frets the Minds of Mankind in Converſation with each other, and how much Cafuiſty and Danger attend the Conduct of the Politician: I ſay, for a Man ſeriouſly to reflect upon all this, he will be apt to conclude, that the Wiſdom of this World is ſo far from making a Man happy, that it generally gives him a great deal more Diſquiet, than the Ignorance and Simplicity of the ſavage American Countryman.

SECT.

SECT. V.

The Pleasures of this World are to be despised, because they are cloying and satisfying.

THERE is no Pleasure truly valuable, but what we may take a full Draught of, and which our Appetite will allow us to enjoy over and over; but the Pleasures of this World almost obey us at the first Taste; and we grow more weary of them afterwards, than we were desirous of them before. And this is,

Because we quickly find an End of all the Satisfaction they can afford us.

There is no Infinite to be found here; no inexhaustible Stock of Pleasure, which can never be enjoyed over; but only some few petty ones, this Book about the same Objects, which the greedy Appetite soon runs through, and then the Pleasure is gone. We find so little in them at first, that it is nauseous to go over them again; they may serve a little to divert us once or twice, but we are surfeited with them afterward. We are forced to use a great deal of Art, you see, to take any tolerable Pleasure in a delicate way of

Living

Living; we must chop and change our Diet every Day, to make our Palates relish even those loathed Delicacies. The Furniture of a new purchas'd House, is no more than that of a new Suit of Clothes; 'tis gone after one Day's wearing. The Satisfaction we take in a new-built House is vanished as soon as it is finished. In short, all the Pleasures of this World are but like Children's Toys to us; we are awhile disposed to play with them a little; but afterwards, we are fain to throw them aside.

2. *Because they generally indispose our Bodies.*

Let the Drunkard but consider how wearisom a Vice his is, how it humbles his Body ten times more than the hardest Labour, how it makes him dread the Glass, more than he would do a Bear; let him think, if after his Height of Jollity, the *Morrow is not a Day of Horror*, if the prettiest Intriguer he finds does not make his crowned Dreams more troublesom to him than his Physician's Drugs. Let the lustful Man speak, if his loathed Embraces, and his fleeting Joys, have not left behind them as much Sorrow as Pleasure, does not take off his Appetite from that Vice, which has so enervated his Body, as well as his

Mind. Nay, even our Pastimes, which are to refresh us after our Labour, in a short time weary us themselves; so that at last we are forced to take Sanctuary in Labour, to recreate us upon their Tiresomness.

SECT. VI.

The Pleasures of this World ought to be despised, because we must in a very little while leave them.

IT would be an inexcusable Piece of Folly, for a Man to fall in Love with the Inn he is to lodge in but one Night, because it is, perhaps, a pretty contrived Place, and he has all Things handsomely about him. A wise Man would rather consider, That though this is a pretty Place, yet it can signify but little to him, who is so very shortly to leave it; if he was always to live there, it was something, but he must away from it the next Morning; that it is in vain to set his Affections upon that, which he cannot stay to gratify them with. Now, why should we not be as wise, as to our Thoughts about the Things of this Life? The Scripture tells us over and over, and our Reason convinces us, that this Life is but a Pilgrimage, and a Time of sojourning; that

to

to be enamoured of the good Things of this World in as foolish, as to intend a Journey, and to take up our Habitation upon the Road. Nay, that Time we are to lodge at an Inn takes up some valuable Part of the Space of our short Life; for the youngest Man cannot expect to live forty thousand Times longer than the twelve Hours he is to stay there. But the Time we have to stay in this World bears no Proportion to the Time we must live in the next. All the Time we have to live here, is not much, if we consider it in itself; threescore and ten Years (granting we live so long) are not the threescore and tenth Part of the Time, which the World has already continued; nay, further, if we had lived the whole five thousand Years, it would have been Nothing to Eternity; it would not have been so much as one Unit to all the Figures in a Table of *Logarithms* set at Length; not so much as one Atom to the whole *magnus Orbis*.

But, without this Consideration, the bare Thoughts of being once to part with the Pleasures of this World, are enough to damp our Spirits, and quell our Affections towards them. Let but the great Man consider, that a Time will come, when he shall lie faint and drooping upon

his last Bed; when all his dainty Confections and artificial Dishes shall be flat and insipid to his decay'd Palate; when all the jolly Mirth of a Drinking Entertainment, shall be changed for the melancholy Looks of grieving Friends, and a despairing Physician; when his Bags of Gold, and his large Possessions can no more comfort his Soul, than they can relieve his Body; when he shall find his Estate must be left whether he will or no, and that the impatient Heir is there ready to catch the dropping Inheritance; that he must shortly change his costly Robes, for a few vile Weeds of Flax or Flannel; that he must lose his splendid and delightful Mansion, for a dark and cold Grave, where he that has commanded the Knees of so many fine Supplicants, shall be trampled upon by the Foot of every poor Geer-by. And when a Man seriously considers this, he will not be so greatly enamoured of those Things, which he is so certain to part with, and it may be so very soon; which he must go perfectly stript of into the other World, and may be some time without enjoying them in this.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

The Pleasures of this World ought to be despised, because we are in Pursuit of far greater Pleasures.

WE have before considered, how great the Happiness of another World is; and therefore, if we have any Reason or Sense, we must look upon all the Pleasures of this World, as but poor and pitiful Things, in respect of that. Whilst we have that noble Prospect in our Eye, we must overlook these little Gaieties, which present themselves before us here; whilst we are running for that glorious Immortal Crown, we must not make a Stop at all the sorry Trash that lies in the way; whilst we are contending for so valuable a Prize in the other World, we must not aim at such Trifles, as we find in this. Farewell therefore ye perishing Riches, what are ye to that Immortal Inheritance, which is prepared for me by my Blessed Saviour? Farewell ye gilded Honours of this World, what are ye to that Substantial Eternal Weight of Glory, which is purchased for me by my Glorious Redeemer? Farewell frail and fading Beauty, what art thou to the

Charms of that Angel-like Body, with which at the last Day I shall meet my Triumphing Saviour in the Clouds? Farewell ye pleasant Friends, and entertaining Company; for what are ye to the dear Embraces of Fellow-Saints and Angels? What is your short-lived Mirth and Pleasure, to those Eternal Concerts of the Heavenly Hallelujahs? Assure to me, my Gracious God! the Pleasures of that Life, and let the eager Courters of them take all the Joys of this; let me be one of those that sit on thy *Right Hand* there, and dispose as thou pleasest the Blessings of thy *Left Hand* here! I shall not grudge to part with all, whilst I gain thee, O Blessed State of Immortality! Write my Name in thy Book, O my Glorious Creator! sanctify me with thy Grace, O thou ever Blessed Spirit! and then come, Lord Jesus, make no long tarrying!

OF THE MYSTERY OF MANKIND.

Out of S. *Gregory Nazianzen*, Poem. 14.

Τίς γινόμην; τίς δ' ἔσομαι; τί δ' ἐνεγκεῖν μοῖρα δέδηκε;
Πῶς ἔμφρων σύνεσις φιλόσοφα μήγ' ἁδίνουσ'; &c.

WHAT was I once? What now? What shall I be?
Or how, Great God, wilt Thou dispose of me?
For let me turn my Eyes on any side,
I find but slender Marvels unto Pride:
And if this Life were all my Happiness,
The vilest Brute would more of Joy possess.

From the Dam's Womb the jocund *Calf* does leap,
And to the flowing Dug with Joy does skip:
Three Years in Rest he lives, and then does know
No Grief beyond the Drawing of the Plough.
The nimble Colt his Legs new foaled tries,
And wild his Mother round the Meadow flies.
The *Bear*, the *Boar*, the *Lion*, and the *Hind*,
For Swiftness do out-strip the fleetest Wind;

With Mirth and Joy they unknown Courage feel,
And boldly walk upon the Hunter's Steel.
The Birds their fledg'd with Wings, dare mount on high,
And tread the Spaces of the liquid Sky.
The wanton Ass herself a Palace builds,
And the first Spring her Cell with Honey fills.
All these do feast upon the native Field,
Whilst simple Nature does abundance yield.
No Seas they traverse, and no Fields they plough,
They feel no Labour, and no Care they know.
The sturdy Lion kills throughout the Plain,
But scorns to dine two Days upon his Slain:
Each other Day's enough for his Repast,
One Draught of Water for two Nights will last.
These live a Life so wholly void of Care,
That Woods and Dens their only Houses are.
They live in Health and Vigour all their Days,
No Fear of Death their Happiness allays:
No mourning Song is sung when they are dead,
No sigh Relation weeping shows his Head.
Down to the Shades they do undaunted go,
Nor fear a worse Estate than this they know.

But for our Race of *Man*, no Brutes can be
Both sad and miserable Things as we.
Spontaneous Kind! brought forth with cruel *Pains*,
Bred up with *Labour*, oftentimes in vain.
Me first in Arms a tender Mother bore,
Next, like the Brutes, I crept along on Four.
Next that I stood erect, and by Degrees
Ventur'd to walk with weak and trembling Knees.
Then I lisp'd Words hardly to be discern'd,
Which to pronounce at School with Grief I learn'd.
Twenty Years old from Guardianship set free,
A thousand Brangles did entangle me:
A thousand Harms were by my Folly brought,
And more were by the Devil's Malice wrought.
Fain would I free myself, but still I find,
I swim in vain against the Waves and Wind.

Ah,

Ah, miserable Life! were I to paint
In a just Table, thy Sorrows with thy Joys;
The Scale of Grief down to the Ground would bear,
And ev'ning lightly mount the pleasing Air.
One would be fill'd with Dangers of the Sea,
With Labour, and the Cares of Husbandry,
Wars, Tumults, Thieves, Lawsuits, Usury,
Sickness, hard Study, Misery, faithless Friends,
Which end the Sorrows which this Life intends.

See what the Joys of Life will countervail,
Feasts, Jollity, Sleeping, Dancing, Musick, Health,
And the Night-Revelings of the jolly Boys;
Wives Fortune, and the Sweets of Hymen's Bed,
And a new Wife again, when th' old one's dead.

Beauty itself, the Lover's darling Theme,
Is all but Fancy, and deluding Dream.
There's little Joy in Children to be had,
There's Care in good ones, and there's Plague in bad.
Riches are Things which never stand still,
But fly like Tennis-Balls from Hand to Hand,
How miserable this! especially
When the best Man the most unhappy be.

Now for our *Grand-Sires Ills*, one cannot tell
Whether to laugh at them or to bewail;
Or which Philosopher most Reason had
For what he did, the Laughing or the Sad.
What wretched Fools the Greeks and Trojans were
To spend so many Lives to gain a Whore?
Two *potent Nations* did a War commence,
When a Bear's Head was all the Difference.
Ajax, whose Commands did all the Phrygians stand,
Falls in a frantick Fit by his own Hand,
And *Agamemnon*, who lately the Fate
Does meanly by his Wife's Dishonour die.
The famous *Hercules*, Youth's ablest Son,
By poyson'd Doublet lies his Strength done.

The

The Cyst, and the Cruse keep'd to Fate,
As well as all our Happiness of late.
Great *Alexander* conquer'd all the World,
And out of it by one Diseases was hurl'd.
Death equals all, poor Jesse shews us high
As the proud'st Monarch of the Earth does lie.
And mighty Conquerors lost Life a Groat,
In the same Inn, with Hostler, waiting-poor Slave.

These are but thin Lifes Griefs, but who can tell
What Pains attend the Damned Souls in Hell?
A dreadful Flame, eternal Darkness there,
And that sad ever-gnawing Worm Despair.
Were heavier Sinners no'er thrown down by Death,
Or with the Brutes t'have perished in Death,
Than after suffering so much Trouble here,
To undergo a greater Torment there.

What mighty William could great Adam teach,
That for an Apple all his Glory lost?
Or what could Solomon persuade to more,
That Royal Slave of any Woman's Whore?
Judas, who had in th' Apostleship Possession,
(He one would think should have misby Guest or Saints)
Betray'd the Lord of Life for Thirty Pence.

Oh! free me then, for ever Saviour, from the fatal Horrors,
And let my ruthless Soul keep on this Shore,
That Heav'nly Bliss which there I do desire to find,
Is all the Stay and Comfort of my Mind.
For this World's Goods are empty nauseous Joys,
Which with the wisht Saturn I do despise.
I do my Spanish Manjar-blanco slee,
The Happiness of the great Dominion See,
And those of gaining the Indies I scorn Thee.
Friends and Relations Gold and Rod I leave,
The down-right Honesty, and the unshackled Knave;
The kind Gospel-saints, and those curious Men
That kill themselves for their own publick Opinion.

Let

Let others then enjoy this World for me,
I will upon the first Advantage flee;
O Life long only in thy Misery!
How long shall I stick in this noisom Mud,
Where always Torment does succeed a Good?
To eat and drink is all our Pleasure here,
And to throw out what Nature cannot bear.
First *Spring*, and then comes Summer in the Train,
Next *Autumn*'s Fruits, and *Winter*'s Cold and Rain:
And then we daily live them o'er again.
W'have Day and Night, Earth, Sea, and Sky to view,
And these a thousand Times; but nothing new.

To me another World my God frame,
For which I have so many Grists endure.
Oh! had I in my Mother's Bowels dy'd,
And never in the Midwife's Hands had cry'd.
For what is Life? 'Tis a continual Death;
We die even before we draw our Breath.
At first we lie secure'd within the Womb,
And from our Birth we hasten to our Tomb:
Then we expect another Funeral,
When the last Flames dissolve this spacious *All*.

Life, like a River, never stands at Stay,
But swiftly comes, and swiftly glides away.
'Tis but a little moving Dust that flies
About, and nothing but Illusion my Eyes,
And does, oblivious the Light, whilst done from Christ strife.
I grope about the Walls, and here and there,
Hunt out the dustless Paths with gentle Care;
Whilst losing of my Way to Heaven's my greatest Fear.

Let me be bold one mighty Truth to say,
That Man is nought but God Almighty's Play:

With

With Vizors on, to act a Part w'are sent;
Not what we are, but what we *appear*;
And when the Vizor is drawn off, we see
W'are nothing like what then we seem'd to be.

Such is the Life of these, who only prize
These Phantasms of Life, these dreamy Joys.
But as for me, my dearest Christ will give
Another Life, when here I cease to live.
Each Part of me a different Course will steer;
My Body to its Mother Earth shall bear;
My Soul, the Breath of God, shall upward fly;
And there in long'd for Immortality.
So the dull *Waters* heavily roll down
Into the lowest Caverns of the Ground;
Whilst the brisk *Flames* do nimbly mount on high,
And gain them peaceful Mansions in the Sky.

What noble Creatures shall we then appear?
Oh! what an Angel shall a Man be there?
When, Serpent-like, he shall have chang'd his Skin,
For a new Body free from Death and Sin;
So glorious all without, and holy all within!

Dance, O ye Priests, for Joy; for I am dead,
You need not now be of my Power afraid.
Rejoice ye Fathers of my Diocese,
Sure I can now no longer you displease.
Your *Malice* makes you subject to God's Frown,
My *Sufferings* make me share my Master's Crown.
And when I come to found in the Skies,
I'll offer up a Heavenly Sacrifice.
There I shall your unmercy'd Bishop be,
And for your *Hate*, put up my *Prayers* for you.

ON THE VANITY OF PLEASURE.

Boet. Lib. III. Metr. 7.

HABET omnis hæc Voluptas,
Dimittit ægè fruentes;
Ajunxit par volatibus,
Ubi gratia mulcta fedè,
Fugit, & magis timeri
Fecit illa cuncta mœsta.

Pleasure has always this Event,
When the Joy's gone, then to torment:
And, like the Bee, she gives a Taste
Of Sweet, which does a Moment last;
Then flies away swift as the Wind,
And leaves a lasting Sting behind.

Jesus Mortificans.

THE MORTIFICATIONS OF THE HOLY JESUS.

I.

AH Blessed Jesu! how couldst Thou,
To whom the winged Seraphs bow,
Leave thy Empyrean Crown,
And humbly here on Earth come down?
That Thou shouldst leave thy Father's Glory there,
To save us wretched Sinners here!

II.

He the great Eternal Thought,
That into Form the Chaos brought;
That made all Glories which we see,
That might have found a Genial Cedar's Knee,
In a vile Stable chose first to appear,
To save us wretched Sinners here.

III.

Thou that couldst say the Heavens are mine,
Nought on Earth shou wouldst have Thine:

Thou

Thou didst to all thy Rights land,
And on thy Creatures Will depende:
Hunger and Cold thou patiently didst bear,
To save us wretched Sinners here.

IV.

Thou, the Miracle of Love!
Envy's greatest Mark didst prove.
Thy Goodness which did shine so bright,
Was once blasphem'd all Black with Spite.
Thy Foes thou didst require, but with thy Prayer,
To save us wretched Sinners here.

V.

Thus the Lord of Life to Death
Didst resign thy Heavenly Breath.
He thus unAll a Being gave,
Goes humbly down unto the Grave.
The Son of God our Mortal Fate soon shares,
To save us wretched Sinners here.

VI.

Thy Breast, which never harbour'd Sin,
Her Wounds without, and Grief within.
Thy Hands are nail'd unto the Cross,
That ne'er were lift up but to bless.
Thou didst our Sins a greater Torment bear,
To save us wretched Sinners here.

What shall I do, my God, to give
Oh! teach me but like Thee to live:
And by thy Precepts be led,
That's the Return thou dost, my God, require
From a poor wretched Sinner here.

A DIALOGUE ON THE *Contempt of the World*, BETWEEN THE TEMPTER and SOUL.

Tempter. COME Noble Soul enjoy the Day,
And drive distrusting Cares away:
For Pleasure Heav'n did these refore,
Then crown with Rose and with Wine.

Soul. To Heav'nly Bliss the Heav'nly King
Designs Immortal Souls to bring;
Such finishy Joys then dost prepare,
Thou foolish Harpyth of the Air!

Tempt. See how the generous Juice inspires
Noble Thoughts, and soft Desires;
See Wit, like it, sparkling and bright,
That flouts away the sensible Night.

Soul. No rather, Tempter, let me find
The Comforts of [illegible];
Such Joys as ravish'd Saints do feel,
As they devout at Altar kneel.

Tempt.

Tempt. Oh! taste the Joys of tender Love,
The Softness of the *Paphian* Dove,
See how transported Lovers lie,
And in *Elysium* seem to die.

Soul. No feel the Joys from him above,
Who's God of Peace, as well as Love:
Unmingled Bliss and constant Charms
Flow only, Jesu, from thy Arms.

Tempt. The Miser's Pleasure next adore,
The Beauties of the shining Ore:
How pleasant is it to behold
Large Farms and ponderous Bags of Gold!

Soul. I joy with th' Eye of Faith to see
The Riches of Eternity:
These always shall remain the same,
Whilst those shall perish in the Flame.

Tempt. Go then in Honour's Chariot ride,
And triumph in the glorious Pride;
Fame's Trumpet speak thy Praise aloud,
Thou walking thro' the bowing Crowd.

Soul. Thou know'st, false Fiend, the greatest Fame
Vertue and Religion claim,
And what the Noblest Honour brings,
Is for to serve the King of Kings.

Tempt. Then gratify'd with some Celestial Flame,
Seek out at least a Future Fame:
Mens Tongues shall thee a Being give,
And make thee in the Grave to live.

Soul. I hope in Heaven Eternally
To live, when thou shalt wish to die.
When an Immortal starry Crown
My joyful Temples shall surround:

When

While a new Body all Divine
Shall the Pleiades Lamp out-shine:
When I shall see, Fth' Tri-une Glass,
Whate'er *shall be*, *or is*, or *was*:
When I shall feel my exulting Soul,
In Oceans of fresh Pleasure roll:
When Death and Time shall be no more,
But new Joys still augment the Store,
And an Eternal Now shall always be before.

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FINIS.